
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
3 1761 00317852 2



MACMILLAN AND CO., Limited
LONDON · BOMBAY · CALCUTTA
MELBOURNE

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
NEW YORK · BOSTON · CHICAGO
DALLAS · SAN FRANCISCO

THE MACMILLAN CO. OF CANADA, Ltd.
TORONTO

A HISTORY OF PERSIA

تاریخ آینه گذشته است و درس حال

(Through the courtesy of Doctor Ahmad Khan.)

History is a mirror of the past
And a lesson for the present.
A Persian Proverb.



SHAH ABBAS THE GREAT.

(From an original Persian painting.)

(From Sir John Malcolm's *History of Persia.*)

A

HISTORY OF PERSIA

BY

LIEUT.-COL. P. M. SYKES
C.M.G., C.I.E.
INDIAN ARMY
GOLD MEDALLIST OF THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY
AUTHOR OF 'TEN THOUSAND MILES IN PERSIA'
AND 'THE GLORY OF THE SHIA WORLD'



ACHAEMENIAN GOLD PATERA.
(From Br. Museum.)

WITH MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. II

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
ST. MARTIN'S STREET, LONDON
1915



Part of a Persian Hunting Scene.
(From a Silver Vase in the Hermitage Museum.)

CONTENTS

CHAPTER XLIV

CHAPTER XLV

CHAPTER XLVI

CHAPTER XLVII

CHAPTER XLVIII

CHAPTER LV

CHAPTER LVI

CHAPTER LVII

CHAPTER LVIII

CHAPTER LIX

CHAPTER LX

CHAPTER LXI

CHAPTER LXII

CHAPTER LXIII

CHAPTER LXIV

CHAPTER LXVIII

CHAPTER LXIX

CHAPTER LXX

CHAPTER LXXIV

CHAPTER LXXV

CHAPTER LXXVI

CHAPTER LXXVII

CHAPTER LXXVIII

CHAPTER LXXIX

CHAPTER LXXX

CHAPTER LXXXI

CHAPTER LXXXII



ABAGA.

ILLUSTRATIONS



MOHAMED SHAYBANI.

MAPS

VOL. I

VOL. II


TURKESTAN
CASPIAN SEA
R. Oxus
Merv
Sarakhs
Tiflis
Caucasus Mts
Ardebil
AZERBIJAN
Nineveh
Jurjan
Nisabur
Mt Demavend
Teheran
Reiy
KHORASAN
Herat
Hamadan
Mt Elvand
Holwan
Khanikin
Nihavend
Jalula
Nahrawan
Bagdad
Medain
Anbar
Babylon
Nimrud
Najaf
Kufa
Hira
Kadisiya
Khaffan
Tekrit
Samarra
Kadisiya
IRAK-AJEMI
PERSIA
SIJISTAN
IRAK-ARABI
Sus
Tostar
Jundai Sabur
Ispahan
KHUZISTAN
Ram Hormuz
Ahwaz
Karun
Ulleis
Chaldea
Obolla
Basra
Istakhr
FARS
Shiraz
KIRMAN
Hafir
Shat al Arab
PERSIAN GULF
HEJER
Beni Rabia, Bekr & Modar
Dahna
Beni Temim
MAKRAN
Asad
Akraba
Katif
Daba
GULF OF OMAN
Ruzakha
Yemama
Beni Yerbu
Beni Hanifa
Bitah
Desert
BAHREIN
Beni Abd el Keis
OMAN
Tropic of Cancer
ARABIA
MAHRA
Hamdan
Beni Kinda
Nejran
YEMEN
Marib
Sana
HADRAMAUT
INDIAN OCEAN
Aden
Tehama
40°
30°
20°
50°
60°
tude East of Greenwich



THE OPENING *SURA* OF THE KORAN.

CHAPTER XLIV

THE CAREER OF MOHAMED AT MECCA

Praise be to God, the Lord of creation,
The most merciful, the most compassionate!
Ruler of the day of Reckoning!
Thee we worship, and invoke for help.
Lead us in the straight path;
The path of those towards whom Thou hast been gracious;
Not of those against whom Thy wrath is kindled, or that walk in error.
The Fatiha or Opening Sura of the Koran.

A Description of Arabia.—The rise of Islam[1] was an event of such overwhelming importance to Persia that, although some of its results have been referred to in the previous chapter, it seems advisable to deal with it in a connected way from the beginning.[2]

The peninsula of Arabia, with an area four times as large as France, has a central tableland termed Nejd,

[1] Islam signifies "Submission to the will of God." A follower of the religion is termed a Mussulman, Muslim, or Moslem, the second form being the participle of Islam. The term "Mohamedan" is not usually applied by Moslems to themselves, except so far as it has been adopted owing to European influence.

[2] Among the authorities consulted are *The Caliphate* and also *The Life of Mahomet*, by Sir William Muir; *Geschichte der Chalifen* (4 vols.), by Dr. Gustave Weil; *A Literary History of the Arabs*, by R. A. Nicholson; and *Arabia, the Cradle of Islam*, by Rev. S. M. Zwemer.

which covers one-half of the peninsula and averages some 3000 feet in altitude. Round this in every direction, and especially to the south, lie deserts. Beyond these wastes stretch chains of mountains, for the most part low and barren, but in Oman to the east and in the Yemen to the west attaining considerable elevation. The coast line of Arabia, backed by an unbroken mountain barrier, extends down the Red Sea to the Straits of Bab-ul-Mandeb, or "Gate of Tears," thence in an east-north-easterly direction to Ras-ul-Hadd, and so round to the Persian Gulf, a total distance of four thousand miles, in which hardly a single good natural harbour or inlet is to be found. The peninsula is therefore difficult of access from every quarter, a fact recognized by its inhabitants, who call it *Jazirat-ul-Arab*, or "the Island of the Arabs." Nor are its internal communications good; for the great desert, the *Rub-al-Khali*, or "Solitary Quarter," has, from time immemorial, divided the country, separating the north from the south. It is in consequence, perhaps, of this natural barrier that we find at an early period the rude nomads of the north speaking Arabic and the more civilized inhabitants of Yemen and the south Himyarite, a tongue which died out before the sixth century of our era, leaving Arabic supreme.

In the physical geography of Persia we noted the remarkable fact that between the Indus and the Shatt-ul-Arab no river of any importance reaches the sea. Persia is a country of riverless desert, with a rainfall of less than ten inches in the north and perhaps five inches in the south; but Arabia is less favoured still. There also desert is the salient feature, and no rivers are to be found; but both in its deserts and in its lack of water Arabia is more "intense," to use the geographical term, than neighbouring Iran.

The Importance of Mecca.—On the trade with the East, rather than upon any local products, depended the prosperity of Arabia. Even as far back as the tenth century B.C. the spices, peacocks, and apes of India were brought by ship to the coast of Oman. From the Hadramaut, the province lying opposite India, the caravan route

ran to Marib, the capital of the Sabaean kingdom, and thence by way of Mecca and Petra to Gaza. A glance at the map will show how Mecca, which lay about half-way between the Hadramaut and Petra, must have benefited by this land commerce, and explain why it became a centre of population and a resort of merchants.

The importance of this trade is shown in the book of Ezekiel, in which the prophet refers as follows to the riches of Tyre:[1] "Arabia, and all the princes of Kedar, they occupied with thee in lambs, and rams, and goats: in these were they thy merchants. The merchants of Sheba and Raamah, they were thy merchants: they occupied in thy fairs with chief of all spices, and with all precious stones, and gold. Haran, and Canneh, and Eden, the merchants of Sheba, Asshur, and Chilmad, were thy merchants."

This quotation from a Jewish prophet, who is known to have been sent into captivity by the orders of Nebuchadnezzar in 599 B.C., sufficiently attests the ancient importance of this trade, and it is of special interest to find that Aden, the Eden of Ezekiel, was known by the same name more than two thousand years before it was annexed by Great Britain. It was probably in the first century of the Christian era that the Indian trade began to pass by water through the Bab-ul-Mandeb and up the Red Sea, with the result that the caravan routes were gradually deserted and the erstwhile thriving cities dwindled and waned.

The Ancient Religion of the Arabs.—Muir, our great authority,[2] believes that the religious rites practised at Mecca can be traced to the Yemen, of which district its earliest inhabitants were probably natives. They brought with them the system of Sabeanism, which implied belief in one God coupled with worship of the heavenly bodies. To-day the survivors of the sect, many of whom live in the neighbourhood of Basra and Mohamera, are misnamed "Christians of St. John the Baptist" by travellers, although they speak of themselves as Mandeans. They

[1] Chap. xxvii. 21-23.

[2] I have not gone into the sources of the biography of Mohamed, but would refer the student to chap. i. of Muir's work.

practise baptism and ceremonial ablutions, hold the book of Psalms to be sacred, and adore especially the north star.[1] Edwin Arnold has expressed the debt due to Sabeanism in the following words: "Islam was born in the desert, with Arab Sabeanism for its mother and Judaism for its father; its foster-nurse was Eastern Christianity." There is much truth in this view.

The ancient Arabians had seven temples, dedicated to the seven planets. They also worshipped goddesses, three of whom are mentioned in the Koran under the names of Allat, the special idol of Mecca; Al-Uzza,[2] the planet Venus; and Mana, a sacred stone. There was also an idol for every day of the year in the temple at Mecca.

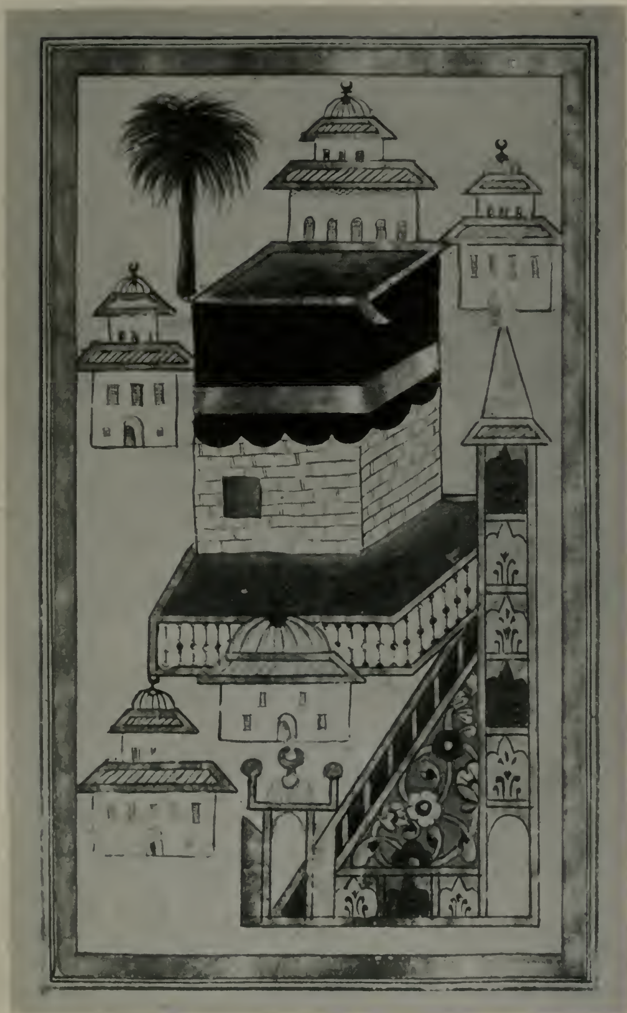
The Kaaba.—The centre of worship at Mecca was the Kaaba.[3] This sacred temple contained, embedded in the eastern corner, a reddish-black stone, which is believed to be a meteorite; it is semicircular in shape and very small, measuring only some six inches by eight. This was reverently kissed by pilgrims, who made seven circuits round the sacred building. In the case of the "Lesser Pilgrimage" it was also necessary to walk seven times between the hills of Safa and Marwa; and in the "Greater Pilgrimage" Arafat, a small hill to the east of Mecca, had to be visited, stones had to be cast against the Evil One in the Mina valley, and the pilgrimage concluded by the sacrifice of victims. The strength of Jewish influence accounts for the reputed connexion of this pre-Moslem ritual with Abraham; the deserted Ishmael is believed to have discovered the sacred well Zemzem by kicking the ground, and it was Abraham and Isaac who built the Kaaba and instituted the pilgrimage.

The Ancestors of the Prophet Mohamed.—Among the Arabs birth was of the first importance, and consequently a brief account must be given of Mohamed's ancestry and tribe. Towards the middle of the fifth century a certain

[1] *Vide* Zwemer's *Arabia, the Cradle of Islam*, chap. xxviii., for an interesting account of the modern Sabeans. The Arabs gave them the name of *Al-Maghtasila*, or "The Washers," from their ceremonial ablutions, and this, being misunderstood by the Portuguese, gave rise to the misnomer mentioned above.

[2] It was in honour of this goddess that Mundhir, the Saracen Prince of Hira, sacrificed 400 nuns, as mentioned in Chapter XXXIX.

[3] The word signifies a cube.



THE KAABA.

(From a Persian MS. in the British Museum.)

Kussai, chief of the Kureish[1] tribe, was the ruler of Mecca, and he gathered into the city his fellow-tribesmen. Apart from the civil rights which conferred on him leadership in war and jurisdiction in peace, Kussai held the keys of the Kaaba, which gave him the prerogative of providing water for the pilgrims. After his death and that of his eldest son a feud broke out among his descendants. The elder branch refused to share any of their privileges with the younger, and for a while it seemed likely that the dispute would be settled by the sword. The supporters of the elder branch dipped their hands into a bowl of blood and invoked the aid of the gods, and Hashim, the leader of the younger, also swore an oath with much circumstance. Ultimately it was decided that the custody of the keys and the right of raising the war banner should be retained by the elder branch, but that the younger should provide the pilgrims with water and food.

As the years went by, Hashim, a striking personality, acquired a great reputation for generous hospitality, and in consequence he was envied by his nephew Omayya, who in vain attempted to rival him. At length Omayya challenged his uncle to a trial before a judge, who was to pronounce upon the question of personal merit. Hashim was forced by tribal opinion to take up the challenge, but on the condition, demanded by him, that the loser should pay fifty black-eyed camels and leave Mecca for ten years. The decision was given in his favour, and Omayya quitted Mecca for Syria, after handing over the fifty camels, which were slaughtered to make a feast. The incident is of importance, because from it dates the rivalry between the Omayyad and Hashimite factions, a rivalry destined to bear baleful fruit. About A.D. 500 Hashim in mature age married an heiress of Medina, and from this marriage a son, Shiba, was born. Hashim died in A.D. 510, and his prerogatives passed to his elder brother Al-Muttalib, who continued the family tradition of open-handed hospitality.

Shiba was allowed to live for some years at Medina,

[1] Kureish is believed to be derived from a word signifying a "highly-bred camel." If this be correct, it is a curious coincidence that Zoroaster's name is supposed to have an almost similar meaning. *Vide* Chapter IX.

but at last his uncle brought him to Mecca, where he was at first mistaken for a slave and called Abdul Muttalib, or "The Slave of Muttalib," a sobriquet which stuck to him through life. A family quarrel concerning property was decided in his favour on the arrival of eighty of his maternal relatives from Medina, and when Al-Muttalib died he succeeded to his dignities. For some time his influence was slight, as he had only one son; but one day he was so fortunate as to rediscover the site of the sacred well of Zemzem, which had existed, as we have seen, in ancient times. The possession of this well at once gave its owner immense power in thirsty Mecca, and with the birth of other sons his prestige became as great as that of his father. But he had made a rash vow that, if granted ten sons, he would sacrifice one of them to the Fates. When the number was reached lots were cast and fell on Abdulla, the youngest. As the father was preparing to fulfil his dreadful oath, he was persuaded to cast lots between the boy and ten camels, which represented the blood fine for a man's life. Nine times the lot fell upon the boy, but at the tenth throw it fell at last on the camels. They were slaughtered to the number of one hundred and given to the inhabitants of Mecca.

Abdulla, who was thus saved from death, upon reaching the age of twenty-four, was married by his father to a relative, Amina[1] by name. Directly after the marriage he started on a trading expedition to Syria. On his return he died at Medina, and on the 20th of August, A.D. 570, his widow gave birth to a son, who was Mohamed[1] the Prophet.

The Political Situation in Arabia before and after the Birth of the Prophet.—Among the earliest foreign relations of the Kureish tribe which have been recorded is a so-called treaty concluded by Hashim with the Ghassanide prince, a Christianized Arab Shaykh, whose capital, Bostra, lay to the east of the Jordan. Hashim is also said to have received a rescript from the Emperor allowing the Kureish to travel in Syria, but in all probability it

[1] Amina is the feminine form of *Amin*, signifying "trustworthy." The name of the Prophet is more correctly written Muhammad. The word signifies "The Praised."

was the local representative of the Emperor who signed the document.

In Chapter XL. reference has been made to the invasion and occupation of the Yemen by the Abyssinians, whose capital at that period was Axum, near the Red Sea littoral. In A.D. 570, the year of the Prophet's birth, Abraha,[1] the capable Abyssinian Viceroy, marched on Mecca, ostensibly to avenge an insult offered to the church at Sana, but probably intending to destroy the Kaaba from political motives. Brushing aside all opposition, he reached Tayif, three stages east of the Sacred City. Thence he despatched raiding parties which captured, among other live stock, two hundred camels belonging to Abdul Muttalib. Following with his main body, which included that portentous monster an elephant, he halted outside Mecca and sent envoys to inform the panic-stricken Arabs that he had no desire to injure them but was determined to destroy the Kaaba. Abdul Muttalib proceeded to the camp of the enemy to treat with Abraha, who restored his camels but would not be turned from his purpose.

The legend runs that Abdul Muttalib would only ask for his camels, and in reply to a contemptuous remark from Abraha retorted that the Kaaba needed no human defender. On the fateful day the elephant refused to advance, and the failure of the expedition is commemorated in the following verses from the Koran: "Hast thou not seen how thy Lord dealt with the army of the Elephant? Did he not cause their stratagem to miscarry? And he sent against them flocks of little birds which cast upon them small clay stones, and made them like unto the stubble of which the cattle have eaten." The passage is a glorified description of an epidemic of small-pox—also termed "small stones" in Arabic—which is historical. The Abyssinian army retreated, and Abraha died at Sana of the foul disease. The news that the Kaaba had been protected by divine intervention must have spread far and wide, and greatly enhanced both the sanctity of the Shrine and the prestige of the Kureish.

[1] Abraha is the Abyssinian form of Ibrahim or Abraham.

Upon the death of Abraha his son Yaksum held the viceroyalty for only four years, to be succeeded by Masruk. It was during Masruk's reign that the famous expedition was despatched by Noshirwan, which resulted in the expulsion of the Abyssinians and the reinstatement of the old Himyarite monarchs under the suzerainty of the Great King. Tabari,[1] who is the authority for this campaign, states that Saif, upon his accession to the throne, was visited by Abdul Muttalib, who is known to have died in A.D. 578. Consequently the date of this campaign must have been between A.D. 574 and A.D. 578.

The Childhood, Youth, and Early Manhood of Mohamed.—The prospects of the infant Mohamed were not bright. His father was dead and his entire property consisted of a slave girl, five camels, some goats, and a house. At the same time he possessed powerful relations. In accordance with custom, the infant was entrusted to a nomad woman, Halima of the Beni Sad, and among the free sons of the desert Mohamed remained until he was six years old. His constitution benefited by the open-air life, although apparently he was subject to epileptic fits. Moreover, the Beni Sad were held to speak the purest Arabic, and the Prophet in after years used to boast, "Verily, I am the most perfect Arab amongst you; my descent is from the Kureish, and my tongue is the tongue of the Beni Sad." Among a people who counted eloquence as the highest of gifts, this upbringing was of great advantage. It is to the credit of Mohamed that he never forgot his foster-mother, and always treated her and her family with generosity and kindness. In his sixth year the lad was taken back to Medina, and when he returned there forty-seven years afterwards he was able to identify the house and to recall the details of the life he had led in it.

Amina shortly afterwards decided to take the child to Mecca, but died on the road. The orphan was most kindly treated by his grandfather until his own death, which occurred when Mohamed was eight years old. With this event the Hashimite branch of the family

[1] Vol. ii. pp. 203 ff.

suffered a loss of prestige and influence which accrued to the Omayyad section instead, and remained with it until the conquest of Mecca by the Prophet.

Abu Talib, the uncle to whom the orphan had been entrusted, treated him with the utmost affection, a fact which seems to indicate that the boy possessed attractive qualities. When only twelve years old he was taken by his guardian on a caravan journey to Syria, which must have enlarged the horizon of his experience.

At the annual fair held at Ocatz, to the east of Mecca, his young mind was doubtless influenced by listening to the contests in poetry among bards of the various tribes. There he would also hear Jewish and Christian preachers. About this period, during the time of the fair, a blood feud arose through the murder of a chief of the Hawazin by a rival, who had a confederate among the Kureish. This occasioned several desperate skirmishes, at one of which the Prophet was present; but he did not distinguish himself. Indeed, at no time in his career did he display martial qualities.

Apart from these skirmishes, dignified by the name of the Sacrilegious War, the Prophet spent his youth as a shepherd, a mean occupation which usually fell to the lot of slaves. In after years he said, "Verily there hath been no prophet raised up, who performed not the work of a shepherd." He must have been held in esteem at Mecca, since it is recorded that he was termed Al-Amin or "The Faithful."

But for the poverty of Abu Talib, it is possible that Mohamed would have continued to lead a shepherd's life, which suited his reserved and meditative nature. But at the age of twenty-five necessity drove him to Syria in part charge of a caravan belonging to Khadija, a wealthy widow of the Kureish. At Bostra he bartered his goods successfully, and upon his return Khadija fell in love with the handsome youth, and married him after obtaining her father's consent by a ruse. The marriage was happy and Mohamed lived contentedly with Khadija, although his two sons both died. It appears that, while continuing to manage her own affairs as before, she

admired her husband's qualities and realized that he was no ordinary man.

Time passed, and when Mohamed was about thirty-five years of age the Kaaba was rebuilt. Each of the four divisions of the Kureish took charge of a wall, and when the structure had risen 4 or 5 feet above the ground, the Black Stone had to be built once again into the east corner. The question who should have the honour of placing the stone into position led to heated debate until an aged citizen suggested that the first man to arrive on the spot should be asked to decide. By chance Mohamed came up, and, being informed of the case, placed the stone on his cloak and called on each chief to raise a corner of it. Thus the stone was borne into the new temple, where the hands of Mohamed set it in position. He may well have thought that his opportune arrival was divinely ordained. As mentioned in Chapter XLII., the battle of Zu-Kar was fought between A.D. 604 and 611. Mohamed, who followed such events with the keenest interest, upon hearing of the victory of the Arabs, is said to have exclaimed, "This is the first day whereon the Arabs have obtained satisfaction from the Persians; through me have they obtained help!" Little that is worthy of note has been recorded of this period. Mohamed, relieved of all worldly cares and surrounded by a few faithful friends and kinsmen, was able to devote himself to contemplation and prayer, and it is related that, like other Prophets, he frequently went into the desert to meditate.

The Divine Commission conveyed by Gabriel.—Muir's work is nowhere more masterly than in his analysis of the steps which led Mohamed to proclaim himself the Prophet of God. "He was seated or wandering amidst the peaks of Hira, buried no doubt in reveries, when suddenly an apparition rose before him. The heavenly Visitant stood clear and close beside him in a vision. It was no other than Gabriel,[1] the Messenger of God, who now appeared in the sky, and, approaching within 'two bows' length,' brought from his Master this memorable behest:

[1] Muir considers that Mohamed confused Gabriel with the Holy Ghost.



MOHAMED AND THE BLACK STONE.

(From F. R. Martin's *Miniature Paintings of Persia, etc.*)

Recite in the name of the Lord who created,—
Created Man from nought but congealed blood;—
Recite! for thy Lord is beneficent.
It is He who hath taught (to write) with the pen;—
Hath taught man that which he knoweth not."[1] . . .

The Assumption of the Prophetical Office, A.D. 613–614. —In A.D. 613–614, the forty-fourth year of his life, we find Mohamed proclaiming himself a divinely inspired Prophet, sent by God to the people of Arabia. His followers, though very few, were both honest and devoted. Among them were Khadija, his wife, Zayd, his adopted son, and Ali, son of Abu Talib, his cousin. Of far greater weight was the adherence of Abu Bekr, a member of the Kureish, a man of substance, and of the highest personal character. Other converts included Sad, Othman, and Abdur Rahman, who himself brought four more converts. Thus slowly during the three or four years which followed the assumption of the prophetic office some forty followers, all of them loyal to the core, threw in their lot with Mohamed.

The behaviour of his fellow-citizens was such as might have been expected. At first, having known Mohamed from boyhood, they treated his claims with contempt, and regarded him as a harmless visionary; but gradually, owing to their connexion with the Kaaba, these feelings changed into open hostility, which showed itself in persecution. This drew all the more attention to the doctrines expounded by the Prophet, who was himself protected by Abu Talib. Others, however, who had no protectors were imprisoned or exposed to the glare of the sun or ill-treated in other ways.

The Temporary Emigration to Abyssinia, A.D. 615.—So hot did the persecution become and so black the outlook that Mohamed recommended his followers to seek a temporary asylum in Christian Abyssinia, and in A.D. 615 a party of eleven men fled to the port of Shuayba, near Jeddah, and thence reached Africa in safety.

The historical interview with the Negus is recorded

[1] This, the ninety-sixth *sura* or chapter, was the starting-point of Islam, and Mohamed himself used to refer to it as his first inspired utterance.

by Ibn Hisham,[1] and the narrative presents a truly remarkable picture of early Islám. In reply to a question by the Negus as to why the refugees, although separated from their own people, entered not into the Christian religion, the Moslem leader said, "O King! We were a barbarous folk, worshipping idols, eating carrion, committing shameful deeds, violating the ties of consanguinity, and evilly entreating our neighbours, the strong among us consuming the weak; and thus we continued until God sent unto us an Apostle from our midst, whose pedigree and integrity and faithfulness and purity of life we knew, to summon us to God, that we should declare His unity, and worship Him, and put away the stones and idols which we and our fathers used to worship in His stead; and he bade us be truthful in speech, and faithful in the fulfilment of our trusts, and observing of the ties of consanguinity and the duties of neighbours, and to refrain from forbidden things and from blood; and he forbade immoral acts and deceitful words, and consuming the property of orphans, and slandering virtuous women; and he commanded us to worship God, and to associate naught else with Him, and to pray and give alms and fast." Well might the Negus weep upon hearing this exposition of faith, and exclaim, "Verily, this and that which Moses brought emanate from one Lamp!"

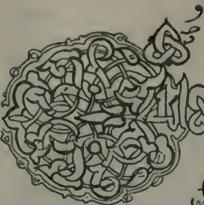
[1] Ibn Hisham wrote the earliest biography of the Prophet about A.D. 828.



THE ANGEL GABRIEL APPEARING TO MOHAMED.

(From F. R. Martin's *Miniature Paintings of Persia, etc.*)

12a



بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
يا أيها الذين آمنوا لا تتخذوا عدوي
وعدوكم أولياء تلقون إليهم بالمودة
وقد كفروا بما جاءكم من الحق يخرجون

QUOTATION FROM THE KORAN.
(From a MS. in the British Museum.)

CHAPTER XLV

THE FLIGHT TO MEDINA AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ISLAM

O true believers, take not my enemy and your enemy for your friends, showing kindness toward them ; since they believe not in the truth which hath come unto you, having expelled the apostle and yourselves from your native city, because ye believe in God, your Lord.—*The Koran.*

The Hijra, or "Flight," to Medina, A.D. 622.—The claims of Mohamed made but slow progress as the years passed. The enmity of the Kureish was so intense that for two or three years they placed the Hashimite section of the tribe under a ban and refused to have any dealings with them ; and the Prophet had the misfortune to lose by death not only the faithful Khadija but also Abu Talib, whose unswerving support of his nephew, although he himself remained an idolater, affords a fine testimony to the nobility of both.

Shortly after the death of Khadija, Mohamed attempted to convert the men of neighbouring Tayif, but the mission was a complete failure. He left the city, pursued by the rabble, and returned to Mecca hopeless as to the future. But brighter days were in store, for his teaching had made so deep an impression on pilgrims from Medina that the

majority of its Arab inhabitants became converted to his creed, and the Jews, who formed a large percentage of the population, observed in amazement that the idols were thrown down and that belief in one God was acknowledged.

An invitation to leave hostile Mecca for friendly Medina was given by a band of seventy leading citizens at a secret meeting held near Mecca, and shortly after this the Prophet's adherents began to migrate in small parties. Mohamed and the faithful Abu Bekr remained until the last. To put their enemies off the track they first hid in a cave to the south of Mecca for a few days, and then, in the fifty-third year of the Prophet's life, on June 20, A.D. 622, the famous journey was begun. From this date the Moslem era starts, the word *Hijra*, incorrectly written Hegira, signifying "Flight." No saying is truer than that "a prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house," and, had not Mohamed been strong enough to face the odium of what the Arabs regarded as a deed of shame by quitting his own people and proceeding to Medina, Islam would in all probability have died with its Prophet, now already in middle age.

The Erection of the First Mosque at Medina.—At Medina he was received with honour and rejoicing, and was pressed by various leading men to become their guest. Unwilling to identify himself with any one tribe, he courteously replied that where the camel sat down there would he dwell. The beast stopped and sat down in a large open courtyard in the eastern quarter of the city. Mohamed purchased the land, and erected upon it the first mosque, a square building of stone, brick, and palm logs. The *Kibla*, towards which the faithful prayed, was Jerusalem. The *Azan*, or Call to Prayer, was now instituted, running as follows: "Great is the Lord! Great is the Lord! I bear witness that there is no God but the Lord: I bear witness that Mohamed is the Prophet of God. Come unto prayer: Come unto Salvation. God is Great! God is Great! There is no God but the Lord!" The traveller from the West to this day finds nothing more solemn or more striking than to



MOHAMED (?) PREACHING.

(From a Persian picture in the Author's collection.)

14a

be awakened in the early dawn by the beautiful cadence of this call to prayer.

The Breach with the Jews.—In spite of the welcome given to the Prophet and the support of his kinsmen, he encountered not only local jealousies but the hostility of the three tribes of Jews towards the new religion. In token of his breach with these, he suddenly directed the faithful to follow his example and pray towards Mecca. This reversal of custom was upon the whole a politic stroke; for, although it laid Mohamed open to a charge of inconsistency, it must have gratified the people of Arabia by preserving to Mecca its pre-eminence in the ceremonial of the new faith.

The Battle of Badr, A.H. 2 (623), *and the Expulsion of the Beni Kainucas.*—For some six months after their arrival at Medina the *Muhajarin*, or "Refugees," were busily occupied in settling down, and in sending for their families, whom the Kureish allowed to depart, although they might well have kept them as hostages. Attacks were then made on the Mecca caravans trading with Syria, but at first without result. In the second year of the *Hijra*, however, a small caravan was captured on the road between Mecca and Tayif, and a member of the Kureish tribe was killed. Such was Mohamed's first success.

He was soon to gain a greater victory, the results of which all Moslem historians have rightly regarded as marking a new era for the religion he taught. Hearing that a rich caravan belonging to Mecca was on its way back from Syria, the Prophet proceeded to Badr with 300 men hoping to intercept it. News, however, reached Mecca, and the full force of the Kureish marched out to the rescue. The caravan meanwhile escaped by travelling off the main route, and the Prophet, upon reaching Badr, learned that an army of 900 Kureish was encamped in the neighbourhood. His enemies, upon learning that the caravan was safe, were not anxious to fight with their fellow-tribesmen; but Mohamed, feeling that he must win or retreat in disgrace, decided to attack. The battle, as was customary, was preceded by single combats, in

which the Moslems were invariably successful, and in the engagement which ensued they carried all before them, the Kureish fleeing, after sustaining a loss of forty-nine killed against fourteen on the other side. Among the slain were some of Mohamed's leading enemies, and those among the prisoners who were specially obnoxious to the Moslems were butchered in cold blood. The remainder were taken to Medina, where they were well treated until ransomed. Of the rich spoil taken the Prophet reserved one-fifth for himself, and divided the remainder equally. The victory of Badr was a turning-point in Islam; for if the Prophet had returned to Medina a fugitive, his enemies would probably have prevailed against him. As it was, his success against a force of the Kureish three times as strong as his own justified him before his followers in ascribing the victory to divine aid. In the eighth *sura* we read, "And ye slew them not, but God slew them."

The year after the battle of Badr Mohamed felt himself strong enough to attack the Beni Kainucas, one of the three tribes of Jews resident in Medina. The other two made no attempt to come to the aid of their co-religionists, and the unfortunate Beni Kainucas were forced by lack of supplies to submit. The Prophet at first intended to massacre all the men, but in the end they were permitted to leave Medina after being stripped of their property. As they were goldsmiths and armourers by occupation their departure did not furnish landed property to the Moslems.

The Battle of Ohod, A.H. 3 (625), *and the Expulsion of the Beni Nazir.*—The career of the Prophet was not without vicissitudes. In A.H. 3 (625) a Kureish force 3000 strong, burning to avenge the defeat at Badr, attacked the Moslem army, which only mustered 1000 men, at Ohod, outside Medina. As at Badr, the Moslems had the advantage in the single combats, but in the general hand-to-hand contest which ensued, the superior numbers of the Kureish won the day. Mohamed was wounded, and but for his foresight in fighting with his back to some crags, there might well have been an irretrievable disaster. As it was, he lost seventy-four warriors, and his

prestige was sensibly lowered. But his burning eloquence gradually persuaded his followers that these reverses were but to test them, and in the following year he strengthened his position by driving out the second of the Jewish tribes. The Beni Nazir were agriculturists, and when they yielded and quitted Medina, the Prophet was able to distribute rich lands and date-groves among his chief supporters.

The Siege of Medina and the Massacre of the Beni Koreitza, A.H. 5 (627).—Two years after the battle of Ohod a still larger army of the Kureish, 10,000 strong, marched on Medina. There could be no thought of meeting such an overwhelming force in the field; so by the advice of Salman, a Persian captive, Medina was fortified. This unexpected artifice, held to be unworthy of Arabs, entirely baffled the Kureish, who after making some unsuccessful assaults broke up camp and marched off. Upon their retirement Mohamed massacred the Beni Koreitza, the third Jewish tribe residing in Medina, which had had dealings with the invaders, and his followers benefited by the rich booty thus acquired. By the repulse of the Kureish the disgrace of Ohod had been wiped out, and the position of Mohamed, whose enemies, the Jews, had disappeared from Medina, was now supreme in that city.

The Truce of Hodeibia, A.H. 6 (628).—The next important step taken by the Prophet was to attempt the pilgrimage to Mecca. This was in the sixth year after the *Hijra*, and although the Kureish refused to permit Mohamed and his followers to enter the Sacred City, a truce was made, known as the Truce of Hodeibia, and it was agreed that the pilgrims would be admitted in the following year.

The Embassies sent by Mohamed, A.H. 7 (628).—Few events in the life of Mohamed are of greater interest than the letters sent by him to Heraclius, to the Great King, to the Governors of Yemen and of Egypt, and to the King of Abyssinia. That to the Great King is said to have run as follows: "In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. From Mohamed, the Apostle of

God to Khusru son of Hormuzd. But to proceed. Verily I extol unto thee God, beside whom there is no other God. O Khusru! Submit and thou shalt be safe, or else prepare to wage with God and with his Apostle a war which shall not find them helpless! Farewell!" According to the legend, the Great King tore up the epistle, and the Prophet on hearing of it prayed, "Even thus, O Lord! rend Thou his kingdom from him!"

The Conquest of Khaybar, A.H. 7 (628).—The conquest of Khaybar, a rich district inhabited by Jews and situated about one hundred miles north of Medina, was the next exploit of the conquering Prophet. The Jews were surprised and offered but little resistance after the death of their champion Merhab, who was cut in two by Ali, now the son-in-law of the Prophet, whose daughter Fatima he had married. The theme is a popular one in Persian art. The seizure of the land by Mohamed added considerably to his resources, and the booty was very rich. Moreover, he had now destroyed the last centre of Judaism in the vicinity of Medina, and henceforward there is little or no mention of the Jews.

The "Fulfilled Pilgrimage," A.H. 7 (629).—Perhaps there is no more extraordinary event in the history of the Prophet than the "Fulfilled Pilgrimage." In accordance with their agreement the Kureish vacated the city of Mecca for three days, and Mohamed at the head of 2000 men performed the rites by encircling the sacred spot seven times, riding seven times between Safa and Marwa, and sacrificing the victims brought from Medina. On the following day the *azan* was sounded, and Mohamed led the service in the same manner as at Medina, while the Kureish from the adjacent hills looked down with wonder at the extraordinary spectacle. The pilgrimage undoubtedly augmented the prestige of the Prophet, who was shortly afterwards joined by Khalid, the great general, and by other men of importance.

The Battle of Muta, A.H. 8 (629).—The raids from Medina now extended to the borders of Syria, and so great was the alarm inspired by Mohamed's activity that at Muta, near the Dead Sea, his main force of 3000 men

was opposed by the imperial troops. Charged by a Roman phalanx supported by Arabs on either flank, Zayd, the commander, and his successors were killed one by one, and only the genius of Khalid saved the defeat from becoming a disaster. As it was, the losses were heavy.

The Capture of Mecca, A.H. 8 (630).—The defeat at Muta cannot have shaken the prestige of the Prophet very severely, since a few months later he crowned his successful career by suddenly marching on Mecca at the head of 10,000 men. No resistance was attempted, and as he treated his fellow-tribesmen with magnanimity, they became converts in large numbers. After superintending the destruction of the idols in the sacred enclosure, Mohamed gave orders for all private images to be broken. This was effected without difficulty, and thus without a single battle the sacred city of Mecca was won and with it the hegemony of Arabia. This achievement was completed by the crushing of the Hawazin tribe which occupied the country to the south-east of Mecca.

The Last Campaign of Mohamed, A.H. 9 (630).—The campaign of Tebuk was the last undertaken by the Prophet in person. He heard that the Emperor was organizing a large force, and with remarkable courage and energy prepared to meet it. He assembled a powerful army, said to have numbered 30,000, of which one-third was cavalry, and marched to Tebuk, to the east of the Gulf of Akaba. There he learned that there was no truth in the rumours of invasion, and consequently directed his efforts to extending and consolidating his power. The Christian prince of Ayla, at the head of the Gulf of Akaba, summoned to submit and pay tribute, immediately complied, and with him a treaty was concluded. Duma was captured by Khalid, and its Christian chief embraced Islam. After these successes the Prophet returned home with greatly increased prestige, and when Tayif, the last town to resist him, surrendered, his power reached its zenith.

The Final Orders of the Prophet.—At the end of A.H. 9 (631) Mohamed promulgated at Mecca by the mouth of Ali the famous "Release," allowing idolaters four months in which to embrace Islam, and giving notice that in case

of refusal they would be crushed. To Jews and Christians, as possessing revealed scriptures, slightly better terms were announced. They were, however, to be reduced to tribute and humbled. This proclamation was followed up by the despatch of embassies to every part of Arabia, the whole of which, including even distant Oman, submitted to the now all-powerful Prophet, and embraced Islam.

The "Farewell Pilgrimage," A.H. 10 (630).—The venerable Prophet was sixty-three years of age and full of honour when he made what is known as the "Farewell Pilgrimage." This set the seal on his success, and it is impossible to follow him to it without sympathy and appreciation of his achievements. His farewell to the people of Mecca ends with the exclamation, "O Lord! I have delivered my message and discharged my Ministry."

The Death of Mohamed, A.H. 11 (632).—Shortly after his return from Mecca, Mohamed was seized with fever, and for some days suffered severely. One morning, as Abu Bekr was leading the prayers, the congregation was delighted by the appearance of the Prophet, who spoke to the people after the service. But this was a last effort, and the exhaustion it occasioned brought on his death.

His Character.—No impartial student surveying the career and character of Mohamed can fail to acknowledge his loftiness of purpose, his moral courage, his sincerity, his simplicity, and his kindness. To these qualities must be added unsparing energy and a genius for diplomacy. Muir is well advised in distinguishing between the early period of adversity and the later years in which success and power were achieved; for it was almost inevitable that as the Prophet became the ruler of Arabia the worldly side of his character should develop at the expense of the spiritual. Instances of cruelty and treachery are undoubtedly proved against him; but it is always to be borne in mind that in judging this extraordinary man we must apply not the standard of our own time, but that of a period and of a world in which cruelty was rife. Like Solomon, whom he resembled in character, he became uxorious in his old age, and for this characteristic also the same allowance must be made. It is certain that he never

lost the love and admiration of men of the highest character, such as Abu Bekr and Omar, and to the end he retained his simplicity, his kindliness, and his courtesy to rich and poor alike. Moreover, he continued throughout his career to proclaim himself "a simple prophet and a warner," though he might easily have made higher claims.

The introduction of Islam brought many benefits to the Arabs. It taught the unity of God, enjoined brotherly love towards all fellow-believers, proscribed infanticide, secured rights for women and consideration for slaves. Alcohol was strictly forbidden. Impartial observers have told me that in India Islam has raised millions of men in self-respect and other virtues to a wonderful extent, and I have already shown how beneficent was its effect upon the Arabs. In the case of the Mongols the change was no less marked, as may be seen by contrasting the savagery of Chengiz with the kindness, the consideration, and the justice of Ghazan, whose many virtues were undoubtedly due to his genuine conversion to Islam. In Africa, too, when the negro adopts Islam he generally rises in the scale of humanity. While remaining an African, he is better dressed, better mannered, and altogether a better and cleaner man. On the other hand, a negro when Christianized is sometimes unable to assimilate our more complex civilization, and in such cases becomes a caricature of the European. These remarks apply to a certain extent to the Asiatic also, but in a lesser degree, because the Semite and the Aryan start from ancient civilizations of their own.

If, as I believe, religion is made for man and not man for religion, it is impossible to withhold approval and admiration from a man whose achievements have been so great. But against these undoubted benefits of Islam there are some things to be set on the other side. The list includes polygamy, the seclusion and veiling of women, slavery, narrowness of thought, and harsh treatment of non-Moslems. As for polygamy, it is slowly dying out owing to progress and economic circumstances, and the veil too, with all that it stands for, is beginning to disappear in Turkey. It must be recollected that even in Christian

Spain the women are partially secluded, and perhaps wisely.

We come to slavery. In Persia, at any rate, slaves are kept only as domestic servants, and are particularly well treated, being with reason trusted more than hired servants. Can we, with a recollection of Hawkins, who bought negroes in Africa to sell in America, throw stones at slavery among Moslems? I think not. Freedom of thought and private judgment are gradually asserting themselves among Moslems, just as among Roman Catholics, however much the *mullas* in the one case or the Pope in the other may deny these privileges. Moreover, until quite modern times it has been the general custom of man to persecute those from whom he differed on religious grounds, and the Moslems certainly have not treated Christians more harshly than the inquisitors did. Toleration is, in fact, a sentiment of recent growth.

If the lives of great men are studied, imperfections are invariably revealed, and in many cases the greater the man the more conspicuous the faults. Personally I hold that Mohamed was, with all his human frailties, one of the greatest of mankind; that he was impelled by the highest motives to beat down idolatry and fill its place with the much higher conception of Islam, and that by so doing he rendered an immense service to the human race, a service to which I pay homage.

The Koran.—The scriptures of Islam, known as the Koran,[1] consist exclusively of the revelations which Mohamed claimed to receive through Gabriel as messages direct from God. These messages were received throughout the twenty-three years of his prophetical life, and were recited by Mohamed before his followers and committed both to memory and to writing. In the stage of culture which prevailed at that period in Arabia writing was a rare accomplishment, and the general belief is that the Prophet himself could neither read nor write; memory was therefore much stronger than among civilized races,

[1] Koran signifies "reading aloud." The syllable *Al* which is occasionally prefixed is the Arabic for the definite article.

and during the lifetime of Mohamed many of his followers had committed to memory the whole of the Koran. To-day the title of *Hafiz*, which implies this sacred accomplishment, is one of honour. But it must not be supposed that during Mohamed's life the order of the various chapters and verses was settled. Indeed we know that this was not the case, for Omar, after the overthrow of Moseilama, pointed out to Abu Bekr that the losses among the reciters of the Koran had been heavy, and suggested that its various portions should be collected. This pious task was entrusted to Zayd, the Chief Secretary of the Prophet, who sought out the fragments and gathered them together, "from date-leaves, from tablets of white stone and from the breasts of men." This was the official and authoritative edition; but a generation later, under Othman, a second edition was prepared by a committee consisting of Zayd and three members of the Kureish tribe. The original copy of the first edition was produced for this purpose, and a final authoritative edition was prepared, all existing copies being burned after its issue. In consequence of this care, there is no question whatever that the Koran, as read to-day all over the Moslem world, is identical with that published during the Caliphate of Othman. In the sequence of some of the verses there is confusion, but throughout there is no question as to the genuineness and accuracy of the verses. When we consider the times in which they had their origin this is extraordinary.

The Koran is universally admitted to be written in the most perfect Arabic, the dialect of the Kureish tribe, and it is held to be as much a masterpiece of literature as we esteem our Bible to be. Moreover, the Koran is read to-day exactly as it was dictated by Mohamed, whereas we cannot deny that the Bible is a translation.

To enlarge upon the doctrine preached in the Koran would be beyond the scope of this work. The one aim and object of Mohamed in the Meccan *suras* was to convert his fellow-countrymen from idolatry to the worship of one God. To effect this, the Prophet, who deeply felt his responsibility, extolled the omnipotence of God and

derided the impotence of the idols. The penalties of hell and the pleasures of Paradise are graphically described, and throughout, as Nicholson says, "his genius proclaims itself by grand lyrical outbursts." As an example I quote one of the early *suras*, which runs :

When the Sky shall be severed,
And when the Stars shall be shivered,
And when the Seas to mingle shall be suffered,
And when the graves shall be uncovered—
A soul shall know that which it hath deferred or delivered.[1]
O Man, what beguiled thee against thy gracious Master to rebel,
Who created thee and fashioned thee right and thy frame did fairly build ?
He composed thee in whatever form he willed.
Nay, but you disbelieve in the Ordeal ! [2]
Verily over you are Recorders honourable,
Your deeds inscribing without fail.

To conclude, the revelations at Medina deal with what may be termed the business side of religion ; laws, ordinances, and manifestos all finding place side by side with occasional but rare outbursts of flaming genius. Yet behind it all were the call to monotheism and the denunciation of idolatry, on which the Koran can claim, and justly claim, to stand.

[1] *I.e.* what it has done or left undone.
[2] The Last Judgment.

ابی الحسن ابی تراب اسدالله الغالب

امیر المومنین علی ابن ابی طالب علیه السلام

Father of Hasan, Father of Dust, The Victorious Lion of Allah, The Commander of the Faithful, Ali son of Abu Talib, on Him be Peace!

THE TITLES OF ALI.

(Through the courtesy of H.E. the Persian Minister.)

CHAPTER XLVI

ISLAM UNDER THE FIRST FOUR CALIPHS

Politically Persia ceased for a while to enjoy a separate national existence, being merged in that great Muhammadan Empire which stretched from Gibraltar to the Jaxartes, but in the intellectual domain she soon began to assert the supremacy to which the ability and subtlety of her people entitled her.—BROWNE.

The Period of the Caliphate, A.D. 632–1258.—The Caliphate began with the election of Abu Bekr in A.D. 632 and lasted until A.D. 1258, when Hulagu Khan sacked Baghdad and put Motasim Billah to death. For nearly three centuries after this catastrophe the title of Caliph was perpetuated in Egypt by descendants of the House of Abbas who lived under the protection of its Mameluke rulers, until in A.D. 1517 Sultan Selim, the Osmanli, having conquered the Mameluke dynasty, induced the helpless Caliph to transfer to him the title and insignia. It is on this transaction (recorded in Chapter LXII.) that the Sultans of Turkey base their claim to the sacred position of Caliph and to other high titles.

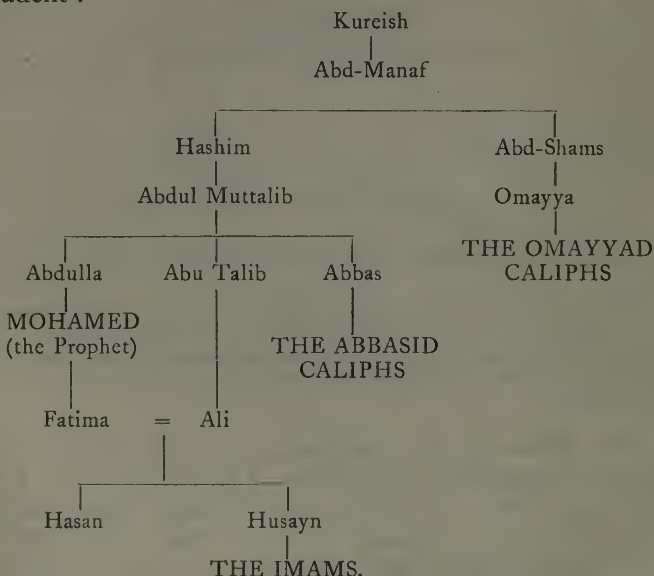
The Caliphate falls into three well-defined periods:

1. That of the First Four Caliphs, A.D. 632–661, the period of the Theocracy of Islam.[1]

2. The Omayyad Caliphs A.D. 661–749, the period of Pagan Reaction.

3. The Abbasid Caliphs, A.D. 749–1258, the period of Persian Ascendancy.

The Genealogical Table of the Kureish.—In order to show the descent of the various dynasties, and their claims of kinship with the Prophet, it is convenient to give the following genealogical table, which is taken from Lane-Poole's *Mohamedan Dynasties*, an invaluable guide to the student :



The Election of Abu Bekr.—Even before the Prophet was buried, there was very nearly bloodshed in Medina at the meeting at which Abu Bekr was chosen to be the Caliph,[2] or "Successor" of the Prophet. He was sixty years old at the time of his election, and was naturally of a mild character. But belief in the Prophet filled him with a moral courage unsurpassed in the records of history.

[1] *Vide* Browne, *op. cit.* p. 210.

[2] *Khalifa Rasul Illah*, or "Successor of the Prophet of God," is the full title.

The Rebellions, A.H. 11 (632).—Before his illness the Prophet had given orders for an expedition to avenge the disaster of Muta ; but Osama, its commander, on hearing of the calamity which had befallen Islam, brought back the banner entrusted to him. Abu Bekr showed his fearlessness by immediately insisting that this expedition should be carried through, although it left the city almost defenceless, and his decision was justified by the result. Yet the courage it showed was extraordinary ; for insurrections broke out all over Arabia, and only Medina, Mecca, and Tayif stood firm for Islam. Medina itself was besieged, or rather blockaded, by neighbouring tribes, but Abu Bekr called out every man capable of bearing arms, attacked the Beduins, and drove them off with slaughter. As Muir points out, defeat at this juncture might well have involved the disappearance of Islam, and to Abu Bekr must be given all credit for the victory. After two months of serious danger the return of Osama as a victor enabled the Caliph, whose prestige must have been enormously enhanced, to crush the insurrections.

With supreme confidence Abu Bekr summoned the leaders of Islam, and, dividing Arabia into eleven districts, despatched a column to each. The most important command was given to Khalid, whose first act was to march north to attack the Beni Tayy and Beni Asad, who had espoused the cause of Toleiha, a rival prophet. The Beni Tayy were won over by diplomacy, while the Beni Asad deserted their Prophet in the battle and then submitted.

In a second campaign the Beni Temim were massacred by Khalid. But his hardest fight was with Moseilama, a rival Prophet, who was supported by the Beni Hanifa of Yemama, at the back of Al-Katif, a tribe which numbered 40,000 fighting men. The struggle was desperate, and in the first charge the Moslems were beaten back to their camp. But they rallied and broke the Beni Hanifa, who took refuge in a walled garden. The Moslem heroes leapt down among them, and the "Garden of Death," as it was termed from the slaughter, was never forgotten. In the slaughter, which was terrible on both sides, the

Moslems lost 1200 men, among whom were thirty-nine warriors bearing the honoured title of *Ashab* or "Companions" of the Prophet. This was the crowning victory, and a few months later, within a year of Mohamed's death, peace reigned once again in Arabia, every district of which had been visited by the irresistible columns of Abu Bekr.

The Battle on the Yermuk, A.H. 13 (634).—In Chapter XLIII. I have confined myself to the campaigns waged against Iran; it will be appropriate here to give a brief account of the wonderful exploits of Islam in other fields. It must be borne in mind that almost our sole authority for these is Arab tradition. But although in details this is naturally partial and one-sided, there is little or no doubt as to the main facts.

The victories of Abu Bekr left the Arab tribes defeated and sullen; but the call to war and plunder welded them together and, as success followed success, tribe after tribe not only sent out its fighting men, but marched in its entirety to settle in more fertile lands.

The strategy of the Caliph in attacking the Roman and Persian Empires simultaneously must have seemed to be midsummer madness, and, judged by all ordinary canons, so it was. But in the end the madmen won, although they were compelled from time to time to neglect one field of operations in order to ensure success in another.

In A.H. 12 (633) Khalid started on his victorious career against the Persian Empire, and in the same year a second Khalid, son of Said, was despatched with instructions to organize the friendly tribes on the Syrian frontier, but to avoid fighting unless attacked. Having in A.H. 13 (634) incautiously pushed northwards towards Damascus, he found his communications cut near the Sea of Tiberias, and thereupon fled panic-stricken, leaving his camp to the enemy. The retreating Arabs were rallied by Ikrima, who had already distinguished himself in the Hadramaut, and Abu Bekr sent such large reinforcements that the army of Syria became the main army of Islam, as compared with the weak force entrusted to Khalid. We read that

there were more than one thousand "Companions" in its ranks. Organized into four divisions, with a total strength of 30,000, apart from a reserve of 6000 men under Ikrima, it marched north, and working independently eventually threatened Syria from Hebron on the west to Damascus on the east.

Heraclius despatched four armies to overwhelm the detached divisions, which thereupon united on the left bank of the Yermuk, an eastern tributary of the Jordan. There the two hosts faced one another for months, without risking any decisive action. Abu Bekr in great anxiety ordered Khalid to leave Irak, and that general, with 9000 men, made one of the greatest desert marches on record and joined the Syrian army. In A.H. 13 (634) he gained a complete victory, known as the battle of Wakusa, over a vastly superior Byzantine army. Thousands of the enemy were driven over a chasm, and the victory, although purchased at heavy cost, won Syria for Islam.

The Death of Abu Bekr and the Accession of Omar, A.H. 13 (634).—After Abu Bekr had ruled Islam for two years he felt his end approaching, and appointed Omar his successor. He then continued to occupy himself with public business until his death, which removed from the stage one of the noblest, simplest, and bravest characters known in history. Among his favourite aphorisms was the following: "One of the best of men is he who rejoices over a penitent, prays for a sinner, and aids a charitable man in his good work."

The first act of Omar was to remove Khalid from his command, after which he raised reinforcements to aid the army in the field by every possible means. As long as he lived the forces of Islam were directed with consummate skill.

The Capture of Damascus, A.H. 14 (635).—Damascus, one of the oldest cities in the world, was the goal of the victorious Arabs. Being unversed in the art of besieging, they made no scientific approaches but merely invested the city, and for months little or no progress was effected. Finally Khalid, who although deposed from the command

was still the real leader, crossed the moat by night on inflated skins, escaladed the battlements, and captured the city. A second victory on the plain of Esdraelon ended the campaign and riveted the Moslem yoke on Syria. Reinforcements were then despatched to Irak, where they arrived just in time to win the battle of Cadesia.

The Capture of Antioch and the Capitulation of Jerusalem, A.H. 15 (636).—After the battle of the Jordan the Moslems marched northwards and besieged Hims, the ancient Emessa, which capitulated. Antioch, too, surrendered after a battle fought outside its walls, and Heraclius, scarcely more than a decade after his splendid victories over Persia, withdrew from Syria, leaving Jerusalem to its fate. The Holy City of Christendom capitulated in A.H. 15 (636), and Omar arrived in person to receive its submission. He marked this historical event by acts of clemency and by the foundation of the mosque which bears his name to-day.

The Conquest of Egypt, A.H. 19–20 (640–641).—While the Arabs were making good their position in South-Western Persia before advancing on to the Iranian plateau, Amr started from Palestine to invade Egypt with a force of only 4000 men. Omar, alarmed at the risk that was being run, at first thought of recalling his daring general, but on realizing that this was impossible sent him considerable reinforcements. With an army now 15,000 strong he had the country at his mercy. He first annexed Upper Egypt, and then marched on Alexandria, the second city of the Byzantine Empire, to which he laid siege. The death of Heraclius, occurring at this juncture, prevented the despatch of a relieving squadron, and the city capitulated on terms. Not content with these conquests, the forces of Amr marched west along the southern coast of the Mediterranean as far as Tripoli.

The Assassination of Omar, A.H. 23 (644).—By this time the power of Islam had been firmly established. The empire of the Chosroes had been annexed and that of Byzantium defeated and deprived of its fairest and richest provinces. Omar, under whose master mind these wonderful campaigns had been conducted with

entire success, had been Caliph for ten years and, although sixty years old, was still full of energy when an assassin's knife laid him low. A Persian slave, known as Abu Lulu, complained to the Caliph that he was assessed too heavily by his master at two *dirhems* a day. Omar, who knew the man, replied that for a clever artificer like him, who was believed to be able to construct a mill driven by wind,[1] the amount was not excessive. Abu Lulu made a threatening reply, and the following morning stabbed the Caliph while he was leading the prayers in the mosque.

Thus died the greatest Moslem after the founder of the religion himself, a man of courage, simplicity, sagacity, and a passion for justice and duty,[2] a combination of qualities which eminently fitted him to control the destinies of Islam during the critical decade of conquest. Nevertheless in Persia the name of Omar is execrated, and the anniversary of his death is celebrated as a day of rejoicing by Persians. Until recently they were accustomed to burn the effigy of the Caliph who conquered Iran.

The Accession of Othman, A.H. 24 (644).—Omar upon his death-bed expressed the wish that Abd-al-Rahman should be his successor, but he refused, and the matter was referred to a body of electors. In the end, however, Abd-al-Rahman was permitted to make the choice. For long he wavered between Ali and Othman, but finally declared the latter to be the Caliph. Othman's reign lasted for twelve years, but from the outset it was clear that he did not possess the necessary qualities for dealing effectively with a difficult situation. Even under the iron rule of Omar it was impossible to curb the insubordinate spirit shown by the Arabs of Kufa and Basra. The best hope lay in maintaining the prestige of the Kureish tribe, but this powerful instrument was weakened through the impolicy of Othman, who favoured his own branch, the Omayyad, with the result that the influence of the Kureish was paralysed by divisions which were widened by lapse of time.

[1] This is believed to be the earliest mention of a windmill. *Vide* also Chapter I.

[2] It was a favourite maxim of Omar's that "the most miserable Governor is he whose subjects are miserable."

The Expansion of Islam to the West, A.H. 25–31 (646–652).—The limits of Moslem expansion had not yet been reached, and under Abu Sarh, a foster-brother of Othman, the Arabs pushed west of Barca and even threatened Carthage, whose Governor was defeated in a hard-fought battle. This period, too, saw the launching of the first Moslem fleet, in A.H. 28 (649). Its initial enterprise resulted in the capture of Cyprus, and three years later it won a naval victory off Alexandria, under the command of Abu Sarh.

The Campaigns in Persia, A.H. 31 (652).—The death of Omar had been the signal in Persia for a widespread but badly organized insurrection, and the Moslem leaders sought not only to reconquer what had been lost but to extend the sway of Islam eastwards. Ibn Aamir, the Governor of Basra, who was entrusted with the conduct of the campaign, first reduced the province of Fars, and then marched across the Lut and invaded the province of Kuhistan, of which he obtained possession. After these successes he sent a summons to submit to the Governor of Herat, who craftily replied that he would do so when Nishapur was taken. Ibn Aamir proceeded to invest Nishapur, while at the same time devastating the neighbouring valley of Tus. His troops suffered severely from the cold but he reduced the city by blockade, and its Governor paid a sum of 700,000 dinars, together with many articles of value. Thereupon the Governors of Herat and of Merv both made terms. It was in this same year that, as already mentioned, Yezdigird was murdered, and his death must have been a great relief to the Caliph. Ibn Aamir, pressing constantly eastwards, won a great victory on the Oxus, which led to the submission of Balkh and other outlying provinces of the Persian Empire. His generals crossed the Hindu Kush, subdued Kabul, and conquered the Sistan and Kerman provinces. The advance, however, was not unchequered by reverse, for the Arabs were defeated by the Khazars in Azerbaijan, and an entire army perished in the snows of Kerman.[1]

[1] I would locate the scene of this disaster in Sardu, as the Arabs occupied Jiruft. *Vide* Yule's *Marco Polo* (Cordier's edition), vol. i. p. 313.

The Murder of Othman, A.H. 35 (656).—As the years went by dissatisfaction with Othman grew deeper. His favouritism towards his own kinsmen of the Omayyad branch was resented by the Hashimite branch at a time when the Beduins of Kufa and Basra were ready to rise against the supremacy of the Kureish. In A.H. 34 (655) Said, the Governor of Kufa, was expelled by its ever-turbulent inhabitants, and Othman, instead of inflicting any punishment, weakly yielded to the storm and appointed another Governor.

In the following year forces from Kufa, Basra, and Egypt converged on Medina, and after an initial failure besieged the palace. The octogenarian Caliph was deserted by the leading men of the city and murdered, but met his end with dignity and courage.

The Election of Ali, A.H. 35 (656).—After this ghastly tragedy there was a reign of terror in Medina, during which Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, was elected Caliph. As a boy he had been one of the earliest converts to Islam, and during the Prophet's life he had shown great heroism and conspicuous ability on the battle-field. But of late years he had lived at Medina, where he enjoyed respect, but had taken no leading part in public affairs.

Muavia, the Governor of Syria.—Among the ablest and most powerful of the Arab chiefs was Muavia, whose father, Abu Sofian, had commanded the Kureish at the battle of Ohod, but had afterwards been converted to Islam. Muavia, who was destined to found the Omayyad dynasty, had distinguished himself in the early campaigns, and had been appointed by Omar to the governorship of Syria, a post which he held for many years. He had visited Medina before the assassination of his kinsman Othman, and had begged to be allowed to lead a Syrian army to his defence, but the aged Caliph had refused his proffered aid. After the murder Muavia acquired possession of Othman's blood-stained shirt and hung it up in the mosque at Damascus, but he refrained from any definite action until he knew what course Ali would pursue.

The Proclamation of War against Muavia by Ali, A.H. 35 (656).—Upon his election to the Caliphate Ali was advised to pursue and punish the assassins, but declined on the ground that he lacked the power. At the same time he was unwise enough to dismiss Muavia, in spite of entreaties to leave him in his post until his own position was secure. Muavia thereupon encouraged the belief that Ali was in collusion with the murderers, and consequently no other course was open to the newly elected Caliph but to proclaim war against him.

The Battle of the Camel, A.H. 36 (656).—Ali was unfortunate in having Ayesha, the favourite wife of the Prophet, as his enemy. She was used as a tool by Talha[1] and Zobayr, who seized Basra after a struggle with the loyalists. Upon the receipt of reinforcements from Kufa, Ali advanced on Basra and attempted to avoid civil war, but failed owing to an attack brought on by the murderers of Othman. Consequently, the Battle of the Camel, so called from Ayesha's appearance in the fighting line in a camel litter, was fought with intense bitterness and with terrible losses on both sides. Talha and Zobayr were killed and Ayesha was captured. The vanquished were treated with magnanimity, but the battle was a heavy blow to the best interests of Islam, and might have been avoided had Ali from the first denounced the assassins of Othman and refused to have any dealings with them.

The Battle of Siffin, A.H. 37 (657).—After his victory at Basra, Ali proceeded to Kufa, which he made his capital. Organizing a large army, he marched up the Tigris and traversed the desert of Mesopotamia to the Euphrates, which he crossed. Muavia was ready with a powerful force, and after a fruitless attempt at reconciliation and much desultory skirmishing the battle of Siffin was fought in A.H. 37 (657). This desperate combat was distinguished by many feats of courage and raged for three days without decisive result. Muavia, becoming disheartened, agreed to a stratagem suggested by Amr, and caused his men to advance with scrolls of the Koran

[1] Ṭalḥa had saved Mohamed's life at Ohod.

fixed to their lances, and crying out: "The law of the Lord! Let that decide between us!" Ali, realizing that it was only a ruse, would not stop the conflict, but his fanatical soldiers threatened to desert him unless he agreed to appoint an arbitrator. Even in this his hand was forced, since he was not allowed a free choice, but was compelled to place his interests in the hands of Abu Musa, a supporter who was at best but lukewarm.

The Arbitration, A.H. 37 (658).—Duma in the heart of the desert was the place appointed for the momentous decision, and thither Amr, the conqueror of Egypt, who represented Muavia, and Abu Musa both proceeded, followed by thousands of Arabs from both sides who assembled to hear the judgment. The two umpires agreed in private that both Ali and Muavia should be set aside and a fresh election held. Abu Musa gave this decision in public, but the astute Amr, who spoke after him, declared that he agreed to the deposition of Ali but confirmed Muavia as the heir of Othman, the avenger of his blood, and the best entitled to succeed as Caliph. This was an astonishing success for Muavia, who was proclaimed Caliph at Damascus, and a heavy blow for Ali, whose supporters, however, did not counsel him to resign the Caliphate.

The Kharijites.—Though destined after lapse of time to be revered as the equal of Mohamed by the Persian nation, Ali was most unfortunate during his life. No sooner had he been obliged, much against his own judgment, to accept arbitration than 12,000 of his soldiers separated themselves from the army on the ground that the cause of Islam had been abandoned to godless arbitrators, swearing that they would serve no Caliph, and insisting on "No rule but that of the Lord alone." Ali showed considerable patience, but before setting out after the arbitrament to attack Muavia, he was forced to deal with these fanatical sectaries, who were committing horrible excesses of every kind. The majority were allowed to disperse, but 1800 refused all terms and were killed to a man. The Kharijites or "Separatists" appeared again and again, not only in Irak

but also in Persia, the remote Kerman province in particular being periodically troubled by the appearance of these visionaries in dangerously large bands.

The Last Years of Ali's Caliphate.—Ali had raised a large force for invading Syria once more, but after the diversion against the Kharijites it melted away so rapidly that the entire expedition had to be abandoned. The Arabs, indeed, were curiously indifferent to Ali. In the following year, A.H. 38 (658), he lost Egypt through an unwise change of Governors, and this misfortune preyed upon his mind; but he made no grand effort to retrieve his position. In the course of the same year rebellion was stirred up in Southern Persia by Khirrit, an Arab chief whose views resembled those of the Kharijites. Up to this point, it would seem, only Moslems had fought in these civil wars, but Khirrit raised Persians, Kurds, and Christians, and drove the Arab Governor out of Fars, and much blood was shed before he was slain and order re-established. Ziad, an illegitimate half-brother of Muavia, whom Ali now appointed to Fars, showed great capacity both in restoring peace and in the administration of the country; indeed he was compared to Noshirwan. In A.H. 40 (660) Ali made peace with Muavia, and it seemed as though at last his troubles were ended.

His Assassination, A.H. 40 (661).—The fanatical Kharijites, seeing that they could not force their doctrines on the empire, were in hopeless mood. Three of them discussed the gloomy situation, and resolved each to kill a leader of Islam, Ali, Muavia, and Amr being the selected victims. Amr escaped through being absent on the day they had fixed for the deed, Muavia was wounded and recovered, but Ali was mortally stabbed. With the magnanimity which characterized him, he gave orders that, if he died, the assassin should be executed but not tortured. After making his will, the unfortunate Caliph passed away and with him ended the period of theocracy in Islam.

His Character.—Ali stands out as the Caliph who was too noble and high-minded for his surroundings.



ALI SLAYS MARHAB OF KHAYBAR.
(From a Persian picture in the Author's collection.)

He refused to be guided by the dictates of expediency and was, in consequence, no match for his adroit and intriguing rival Muavia, who would stoop to the lowest and most criminal means to gain his purpose. At the same time he was narrow, with a vein of indecision which at times gave place to obstinacy. His rigid insistence on honesty in accounts was much resented by the greedy Arabs who plundered the empire. But his perfect integrity and devotion to high ideals, combined with his simplicity and unassuming manners, make him a most attractive figure, and the people of Persia have chosen wisely in making him what we may term their Patron Saint, though, indeed, he is much more than that.

Some of his aphorisms are: "A liberal education is better than gold," to which was added, "No learning availeth if common sense goeth not with it"; "The wealth of a wise man is in his wisdom, and the wealth of a fool is in his possessions"; "No words are good unless good deeds go with them."

The Position of Persia.—"Hellenism," says Nöldeke, "never touched more than the surface of Persian life, but Iran was penetrated to the core by Arabian religion and Arabian ways." This weighty saying should be constantly borne in mind in considering the consequences of the conquest of Persia by the Arabs, for it is the key to the whole situation. After the battle of Nahavand Persian resistance to the Arabs was merely local and the country was subdued without any great difficulty, although a general insurrection broke out upon the death of Omar and there were occasional risings during the Caliphate of Ali. The Zoroastrians were not offered the choice between Islam and the sword, as is generally supposed, but were permitted to retain their religion on the payment of a poll-tax. Salman, who has already been mentioned as fortifying Medina against the Kureish, was the earliest Persian convert, and was numbered among the "Companions" of the Prophet. His example was followed later on by thousands, among whom was a body of Daylamite soldiers who embraced Islam and settled at Kufa. But even conversion brought no true equality,

and in order to secure their lives and property the Persian nobles had to humble their pride and become clients of the Arabs. The contempt which the conquerors displayed towards the people they subdued was like that of the Normans for the conquered Saxons, and is exemplified in their bitter maxim, "Three things only stop prayer: the passing of a client, an ass, or a dog."[1] On the other hand, the finances of the country were modelled on the Persian system and the administration was manned by Persians in spite of efforts to keep them out.

We read of Zoroastrians who fled to remote Kuhistan, the central portion of modern Khorasan, and of some who even emigrated by way of Hormuz to India. But the emigrants were few in number, and from references which abound in the Arab chroniclers it is clear that fire temples and Zoroastrian communities existed in many parts of Persia until comparatively recent times. To-day the only two important bodies of adherents to "the good religion" reside near Yezd and Kerman; but I recollect being informed that the inhabitants of various villages to the north-west of Yezd had not been converted to Islam until early in the nineteenth century.[2]

Although Persia ceased for a time to exist as an independent state, she soon asserted her intellectual superiority over the Arabs, whom, as the centuries went by, lack of education and capacity drove back to the deserts from which they had originally issued. At the same time the contemptuous treatment of the Persians was persisted in for many generations.

[1] *Vide* Jurji Zaydan's *History of Islamic Civilization*, p. 70 (Gibb Memorial).
[2] *Ten Thousand Miles, etc.*, p. 156.

کشتی شکست خورده طوفان کربلا
در خاک و خون طپیده میدان کربلا
گر چشم روزگار برو زار میگریست
خون میگذشت از سر ایوان کربلا

(Through the courtesy of H.E. the Persian Minister.)

CHAPTER XLVII

THE TRAGEDY OF KERBELA

The ship is broken, shattered by the storm of Kerbela ;
Fallen in the dust and blood on the field of Kerbela.
If the Eyes of the World openly wept
The blood would have risen above the Arch of Kerbela.
From the *Elegy of Muhtasham.*

The Accession of Hasan and his Abdication, A.H. 40 (661).—Upon the death of Ali, Hasan, his eldest son by Fatima, was elected Caliph. Muavia prepared to march against Kufa, where an army 40,000 strong rallied to support the claims of the house of Ali. But Hasan, unworthy son of a noble father, was more occupied with the pleasures of the harem than with the toils of administration or the dangers of war. He sent a vanguard of 12,000 men to the front and kept the main body behind at Madain, where he himself remained dallying among the gardens, afraid to try his fortune on the battlefield. On a false report that the vanguard had been cut to pieces, the fickle Kufans looted the camp of the Caliph and attempted to seize his person, hoping to make good

terms for themselves with his rival. Panic-stricken, Hasan wrote hurriedly to Muavia announcing his submission. He offered to abdicate and make Medina his home if granted the contents of the treasury at Kufa and the revenues of a Persian province ; adding, however, the further stipulation that the imprecations against his dead father should cease to form a part of the public prayers. Muavia made no difficulty about these terms, except that he refused to stop the imprecations against Ali. He undertook, however, to arrange that they should never be heard by Ali's son.

Content with this, Hasan, accompanied by his enormous harem, quitted Kufa without regret and passed off the stage into seclusion at Medina, where he died some eight years later from poison administered by one of his wives. Persian tradition represents the crime as instigated by Muavia, but of this there is no proof; on the contrary, it was to his interest that the family should continue to have a harmless voluptuary as its head.

The Death-bed Warning of Muavia to Yezid, A.H. 61 (680).—On his death-bed Muavia sent a message to Yezid, his son and destined successor, warning him of the troubles which lay before him. The message ran, "As for Husayn, the restless men of Irak will give him no peace till he attempt the empire ; when thou hast gotten the victory, deal gently with him, for truly the blood of the Prophet runneth in his veins. It is Abdulla son of Zobayr that I fear the most for thee. Fierce as the lion, crafty as the fox, destroy him root and branch." Had the dying Caliph's advice been followed, the course of history would have been affected.

The Invitation to Husayn from the Inhabitants of Kufa.—The news of Muavia's death produced, exactly as that astute ruler had predicted, a strong feeling at Kufa in favour of Hasan's younger brother Husayn, who was now the head of the house of Ali, and letters were written promising the support of the entire population of Irak, if he would proceed to Kufa. On a strict view of the case Husayn put himself entirely in the wrong by listening to these treasonable overtures ; but when all the circum-

stances are considered it is difficult to blame him for championing the rights of his house, which an unworthy brother had bartered for money and ignoble ease. Moreover, Husayn was probably in straitened circumstances, owing to his elder brother's action in appropriating to his own use the greater part of the family income, while, nevertheless, as head of the family, he had become responsible for maintaining not only his own wives and children but also those of his brothers and other relatives.

The true friends of the house of Ali at Mecca begged Husayn not to trust to the fickle Kufans, and perhaps their influence would have prevailed but for the interested advice of Abdulla ibn Zobayr, who clearly saw that his own ambition to attain the Caliphate could never be realized as long as Husayn lived.

The March on Kufa.—Husayn, desirous of testing public sentiment at Kufa, sent his cousin Muslim ahead to rally his adherents ; but Obaydulla, who had been appointed to the governorship, seized and killed the envoy. The son of Ali may well have been dismayed on learning the terrible news, which made his expedition almost hopeless. But he doubtless realized that he had gone too far to retreat, while his relations clamoured to avenge the death of Muslim. Consequently a little party of thirty horse and forty foot—the numerical weakness was a sign of poverty—quitted Mecca and marched north to Kufa. As if to make the military conditions still more unfavourable, this tiny force was accompanied by women and children. The messages received on the way were more and more discouraging, and the situation was well summed up by a traveller coming from Kufa, who exclaimed, "The heart of the city is with thee, but its sword is against thee." The Beduins at first rallied to the standard of Husayn, but finding the position hopeless, gradually deserted the doomed band.

As they approached Kufa, a chief named Al Hurr barred their farther progress, but courteously intimated that they might move either to the left or to the right. Accordingly, leaving Kufa to the right, they made a somewhat aimless detour round the city until their farther

progress was arrested by Amr, who, according to Persian legend, was bribed by the promise of the governorship of Rei to lead the troops against Husayn. In true Arab fashion many interviews took place, in the course of which Husayn offered to submit, on condition that he was either permitted to return home or sent to Damascus. Obaydulla, seeing the prey in his grasp, refused consent to any conditions and sent Shimr[1]—whose name is perhaps the most execrated in Persia—to force Amr to seize the Pretender's party, or to supersede him if he declined to act.

The Tragedy.—On the tenth of the month of Moharram A.H. 61 (680), the closing scene was enacted on the plain where the city of Kerbela subsequently grew up round the tomb—known as *Mashhad*, or "Place of Martyrdom"—of Husayn; it was built as a memorial of the tragedy. Cut off from the river and with only a rough barricade to protect their rear composed of tents pegged together and some reeds and tamarisk, the little band prepared to fight to the death, with a heroism that challenges our admiration through all the centuries that have since passed. Tradition says that before the battle joined Al Hurr left the ranks of the Kufans and ranged himself on the side of Husayn, exclaiming, "Alas for you! you invited him and he came, and you not only deceived him, but are now come out to fight against him. Nay, you have hindered him and his wives and his family from the water of the Euphrates, where Jews and Christians and Sabeans drink, and where pigs and dogs disport themselves!"

The combat was hopelessly uneven from the beginning; deadly arrows flew from thousands of bows and kinsman after kinsman fell. Husayn at first was intentionally spared, but, as he was plainly determined to die rather than submit, he too was attacked in the end, his tents were set on fire, and he retreated to the river, burning with thirst. Here Shimr and some of the cavalry closed in upon him; he was mortally wounded by an

[1] I have seen the man who acted the part of Shimr at the Passion Play set on and beaten. Breaking away, he rushed to the Governor-General for protection, screaming with fear and exclaiming, "I am not Shimr, but Your Excellency's cook!" Cases are known in which players acting the part of Shimr have been killed.



Flandin and Coste.

THE RUINS OF REI.

(Showing the Tower of Yezid.)

A2a

arrow, and then in a calculated burst of savagery was ridden over by the horsemen. Not a fighting man was left alive, but like the defenders of Thermopylae they left deathless fame behind them. When the seventy heads were brought to Obaydulla, and he callously turned that of Husayn over with his staff, the voice of an aged Arab rose in protest. "Gently!" he said; "it is the grandson of the Prophet. By Allah! I have seen these very lips kissed by the blessed mouth of Mohamed!"

The Journey to Damascus and the Return to Medina.—The two little sons of Husayn, Ali Asghar and Husayn, his two daughters, and his sister were sent to Damascus. There the Caliph, having secured the destruction of the family, disowned responsibility for the acts of his officials and entertained the orphans with respect and consideration until arrangements were made for their return to Medina. In that city they lived, pouring out the stories of their woes to the pilgrims who visited the tomb of the Prophet, until dark clouds of indignation gathered against the Omayyad dynasty.

The Passion Plays.—This tragedy was the origin of the Passion Plays, which are acted annually not only in Persia, where Shiism is the official religion, but also throughout Asia wherever Shia Moslems gather together. I have been a spectator of these plays, and can testify that to listen to the shrill ululations of the women and the grief of the men is so moving that it is difficult not to execrate Shimr and Yezid as fervently as the rest of the audience. Indeed the Passion Plays represent a force of poignant grief which it would not be easy to estimate, and the scenes I have witnessed will remain unforgotten so long as I live.[1]

The Historical Basis of the Shia Sect.—It was as the result of this tragedy that the Shia or "Faction" of Persia came into existence. It is asserted by Arabic writers, among the earliest being Al-Yakubi[2] of the ninth

[1] In chap. xii. of *The Glory of the Shia World* I have attempted to give the tragedy from the Persian point of view.

[2] *Ed.* Houtsma, vol. ii. p. 293 (quoted from Browne's work). "Among the sons of Husayn were Ali Akbar, who was killed at Taff and left no offspring . . ., and Ali Asghar, whose mother was Harar, the daughter of Yezdigird, whom Husayn used to call Ghazala ('the Gazelle')."

century of our era, and it is universally believed by Persians, that Husayn married the daughter of Yezdigird, who is known throughout Persia as "Shahr-bánu" or the "Queen." She figures among the heroines in the Passion Plays, and Browne gives a translation of one of the parts in his usual felicitous verse:

Born of the race of Yezdigird the King
From Noshirwan my origin I trace.
What time kind Fortune naught but joy did bring
In Rei's proud city was my home and place.
There in my father's palace once at night
In sleep to me came Fatima "the Bright";
"O Shahr-bánu"—thus the vision cried—
"I give thee to Husayn to be his bride!"

As the play proceeds, Shahr-bánu is brought to Medina as a prisoner of war by Hasan, who treats her chivalrously. Omar, however, orders her to be sold as a slave.

But Ali then appeared upon the scene,
And cried, "Be silent, fool and coward mean!
These gentle women, traitor, void of grace,
Shall not stand naked in the market-place!"
Light of mine eyes! After such treatment dire,
They gave me to Husayn, thy noble sire.

In other words, as Alexander the Great is believed to be of Achaemenian descent on his mother's side, so the descendants of Husayn inherit the same royal blood through the illustrious Sasanian dynasty. Now the doctrine of the divine right of kings was fervently accepted by Persia under the Sasanian dynasty, as the previous chapters have shown, and there is no doubt that belief in the Sasanian origin of the descendants of Husayn has been the main cause for the faithful adherence of Persia to the house of Ali.

Its Religious Basis and Doctrines.—But this important matter has a religious side. Ali was the first cousin and perhaps the first male convert of the Prophet. He was also his adopted son, and by marrying Fatima became his son-in-law. In other words, since the Prophet had no sons who grew up, the connexion of Ali with the founder of Islam was closer than that of any other man, and he was moreover much beloved by his father-in-law, whom



THE PULPIT OF THE MAHDI.

(In the Mosque of Gauhar Shad at Meshed.)

(Through the courtesy of Lieut. O. Niedermayer.)

he served with conspicuous loyalty and courage. The Shias firmly believe that the angel Gabriel visited the Prophet at Mecca during the course of the "Farewell Pilgrimage" and instructed him to proclaim Ali as his successor. The ceremony was performed during the course of the return journey at the Pool of Khumm, where a throne was constructed from camel-saddles. Ali was set thereon by the Prophet, who then enfolded the "Lion of Allah"[1] in such a close and long embrace that his virtues were transmitted to his illustrious son-in-law. This investiture is annually commemorated in Persia as "the Festival of the Pool of Khumm." In accepting it as authoritative the Shias naturally reject as usurpers Abu Bekr, Omar, and Othman, and deem Ali and his descendants, the Imams,[2] to be the only true successors of the Prophet. So exalted is Ali, the "Hand of God," that the saying runs, "Mohamed is a city of learning, Ali is its gate."

The sacred Imams, whose nature knew no sin and whose bodies cast no shadow, are the intercessors between man and God. They are invested with supreme spiritual leadership and hold in consequence a far higher position than that of the prophets. It is believed that the twelfth Imam never died, but in A.H. 260 (873) disappeared into miraculous concealment, from which he will reappear on the Day of Judgment in the mosque of Gauhar Shad at Meshed, to be hailed as the Mahdi or "Guide" and to fill the earth with justice.

It is needless to say that beliefs such as these render those who hold them bitterly hostile to the general body of Moslems, who rest their doctrine on the authority of the Prophet and the early Caliphs—including, of course, Ali. As will be seen later on, bloody wars have raged between the Sunnis or "Traditionists" and the Shias analogous to those between our Protestant ancestors and the Roman Catholics of Spain, and to-day union between these two great divisions of the Moslem world appears to be as unattainable as ever.

[1] One of the many titles of Ali.

[2] Imam signifies a spiritual and temporal ruler and a leader by divine right.

It remains to add that, in consequence of this doctrine of the Imams, the Shahs of Persia have no religious authority in their kingdom, whereas the Sultan of Turkey is the acknowledged Caliph among Sunnis. Indeed, the position of the Shahs since the downfall of the Safavi dynasty is theoretically that of usurpers, although in practice they were absolute monarchs until the mystic word "constitution" was heard in Persia. It may further be observed that Shias make pilgrimages to Kerbela, the scene of the martyrdom of Husayn, and "Kerbelai" is a title which ranks only second to that of "Haji." They also visit the tomb of Ali at Najaf. In Persia the Sacred City and the Glory of the Shia World is Meshed, where, as described in Chapter L., Riza, the Eighth Imam, is buried, and "Meshedi" is the third and last title of honour affected by Shia pilgrims.



Omayyad Dirhem.

CHAPTER XLVIII

PERSIA A PROVINCE OF THE OMAYYAD CALIPHATE

Men of Kufa, I see before me heads ripe for the harvest and the reaper, I am he. I seem to myself to see blood between turbans and shoulders. I am not one of those who can be frightened by an inflated bag of skin, nor need any one think to squeeze me like dried figs. . . . The Prince of the Believers has spread before him the arrows of his quiver, and has tried every one of them by biting its wood. It is my wood he has found the hardest and the bitterest, and I am the arrow which he shoots against you.—The Speech of Hajjaj bin Yusuf.

The Omayyad Dynasty.—In the preceding two chapters, and more especially in the last, events which have concerned Persia both from the religious and from the political aspect have been treated in some detail, and Muavia, the founder of the Omayyad dynasty, has been given a secondary position. But it would be impossible in a history of Persia, to ignore the importance of the Omayyad dynasty, which ruled the vast Moslem empire for nearly a century, and I have therefore devoted to it a special chapter.

The Position of Muavia strengthened by the Adherence of Ziad.—Muavia began his reign in Syria in A.H. 35 (656), and he became Caliph of the entire Moslem world upon the abdication of Hasan in A.H. 40 (661), but it was not until two years later that he entered into possession of all the lands of the Caliphate. It was at this date that Ziad, Ali's Governor of Fars, became reconciled to him, and presented himself under a safe-conduct at Damascus, bringing all arrears of revenue, and in addition a million pieces as a gift. His remarkable capacity secured the

Caliph's public acknowledgment of his relationship with himself, and he was appointed Governor of Basra, where he ruled the turbulent Arabs with a rod of iron. Later on Kufa was added to his administration, and there he introduced a reign of terror for the purpose of crushing conspiracies that boded ill for the future of the Omayyad dynasty. The Arab chroniclers state that no viceroy ever enjoyed such powers as Ziad, who ruled from the Euphrates to the Indus and Jaxartes, and maintained a court modelled on that of the Great King.

Moslem Progress in the East.—During the Caliphate of Muavia the yoke of the Arabs was fixed more securely on the East. Herat, which had rebelled in A.H. 41 (662), was stormed, and so was Kabul two years later. Ghazni, Balkh, and Kandahar were visited by Moslem armies. In A.H. 54 (674) the Oxus was crossed and Bokhara captured, and in A.H. 56 (676) Samarcand fell to the Moslems, who strengthened their position up to the Jaxartes on the north and to the Indus on the south. In short, they became successors of Alexander the Great.

From Basra and Kufa Ziad governed Persia through his sons. The province of Khorasan, which at this period comprised the Moslem empire east of the Lut as far as the confines of India, was divided into four great districts, with their centres at Nishapur, Merv, Herat, and Balkh respectively. Of these cities only the first-named lies within the limits of modern Iran. It was at this time, too, that Arab colonies were planted in Khorasan, traces of which still survive, although the Mongol invasions shattered their power. I have, indeed, myself frequently come across small bodies of Arab tribesmen, and a regiment termed the *Arab va Ajam* is still recruited in the Shahrud district.

The Power and Prosperity of Muavia.—Muavia certainly ranks as one of the great Caliphs. Owing to his sagacity, his hold on Damascus was never seriously threatened, and he converted it into the magnificent capital of the Caliphate. His successful campaigns to the confines of India have been referred to, and he was on the whole equally successful in the West, attacking

Constantinople or raiding some part of the Byzantine Empire year after year, always acting on the offensive and rarely suffering disaster.

Yezid declared Heir-Apparent, A.H. 56 (676), *and his Succession in* A.H. 61 (680).—While at the zenith of his power and prestige, Muavia decided to designate Yezid, his eldest son, as his successor. Syria and Irak acquiesced in the innovation, whereas at Mecca and Medina the outcry was loud and bitter. But Damascus was now the capital, and the protests even of sacred Mecca could be disregarded by the Caliph, who forced its inhabitants to take the oath of fealty at the point of the sword. The feeling that was excited found expression in an epigram which Masudi has preserved :

> We're filled full of wrath, and were we to drain
> The blood of Omayya, our thirst would still pain :
> While wasting your people, ye still without care,
> Ye sons of Omayya, go hunting the hare.[1]

Muavia died in A.H. 61 (680), and thanks to the effective arrangements he had made, Yezid, his son by the daughter of a Beduin chief, succeeded to the Caliphate as if it had been a hereditary throne, although his tenure of it did not by any means continue untroubled. He was specially addicted to the pleasure of the chase, as the epigram just quoted shows, and gave very little attention to affairs of State. But he does not appear to have been an incompetent ruler, and he hardly merits the invective with which his name has been loaded on account of the tragedy of Kerbela.

The Rebellion of Ibn Zobayr, A.H. 61 (680).—As Muavia had foretold, Abdulla ibn Zobayr proved a dangerous man. Having himself sent Husayn to his death on the field of Kerbela, he took advantage of the unpopularity this deed brought upon the Caliph to head a rising against him. For a time the crafty rebel pretended to be loyal, and Yezid was naturally loath to take extreme measures ; but at last, in A.H. 63 (682), he was obliged to send a force to Medina, which, after defeating

[1] Masudi, ii. 50. The translation is quoted from *Omayyads and Abbasids* by Zaydan.

the troops of Ibn Zobayr, plundered the city of the Prophet for three days. Mecca was next attacked, and in the course of a two months' siege the Kaaba was burned. At this critical juncture news was received of the death of Yezid, and the army in consequence withdrew, leaving Ibn Zobayr for the time being securely in possession of the Sacred City.

The Bokhara Campaign.—While the great events of which we have taken notice were occurring at the centre of the Moslem world, there was expansion, together with confusion, disturbance, and internal discord, farther east. On his succession to the Caliphate Yezid appointed Salm ibn Ziad to Khorasan. He found Bokhara in rebellion, its Queen having offered her hand to the Turkish King as the price of his assistance. Salm, aided by his general Muhallab, whose connexion with Khorasan was intimate and distinguished, defeated the combined armies, the Queen was forced to sue for peace, and Salm returned in triumph to Merv.

The Campaign of the Northern Beduin against the Southern Beduin, A.H. 46–65 (666–685).—The East, and more especially Khorasan, had been convulsed for many years by feuds between the Arabs of the North and the Arabs of the South which broke out in civil war. The fighting had raged for a year without intermission when it culminated in a victory gained at Herat by the Modhar, or Arabs of the South, who inflicted a loss of 8000 killed on the enemy. Other battles were fought and much blood was shed, and all progress was necessarily brought to a standstill by these dangerous jealousies.

The Divisions in the Caliphate, A.H. 61–73 (680–692).—The Caliphate after the death of Yezid was filled by a weakling boy who died in a few months, and Yezid's kinsman Merwan, who was elected in his place, lived for only a year. Abdul Malik, Merwan's son, succeeded him and ruled for some years, with Ibn Zobayr holding the Sacred Cities, Irak, and the East as a rival Caliph. The situation was still further complicated by a certain Mukhtar, who gained possession of Kufa as the agent of Mohamed, son of the Caliph Ali, known from his mother

as the Hanifite. Mukhtar was killed by Musab, brother of Ibn Zobayr, who in turn was defeated and killed by Abdul Malik in A.H. 71 (690). Ibn Zobayr, who probably would have been elected Caliph had he shown more enterprise after the death of Yezid, was attacked for the second time in A.H. 72 (691). It was on this occasion that Hajjaj bin Yusuf, the ferocious general and administrator who was the incarnation of the spirit of the Omayyad dynasty, first played a leading part. He showed no respect for the Sacred City, which he besieged, and Ibn Zobayr, deserted by many of his followers, met a soldier's death in A.H. 73 (692), after thirteen years of successful independence, during which he had been a constant rival of the Caliphs. The Caliphate of Abdul Malik was then acknowledged throughout the Moslem world.

The Massacre of the Enemies of Husayn, A.H. 66 (685).—In A.H. 65 the Kharijites, whose sinister activity kept Persia perpetually convulsed, visited the tomb of Husayn at Kerbela and bewailed their desertion of his cause. They then invaded Syria, but were defeated and returned to Kufa. In the following year there were tribal fights in Kufa which ended in a massacre of all who had opposed Husayn. Persians exult over the just retribution which fell upon Shimr, Amr, and other citizens, many of whom were put to death with torture; and owing to the vigilance of Mukhtar but few escaped. The heads of Amr and his son were sent to the Hanifite, who appears to have been merely a tool of a crafty intriguer.

The Azrakites.—In A.H. 74 (693) Irak was threatened by a branch of the Kharijites, termed Azrakites, and, as the Arabs were unwilling to fight in these campaigns, Hajjaj was appointed Governor. Arriving suddenly at Kufa, he sat in the mosque with his face veiled until asked his name, when he delivered the speech which is quoted at the head of this chapter. Frightened by such ferocious language, the citizens streamed out to the camp and the peril was averted; but time after time insurrections of these fanatics broke out, unhappy Kerman

serving as their headquarters, until, weakened by divisions, the bands broke up, to be eventually crushed by the able general Muhallab, who as a reward was appointed Governor of Khorasan.

The Rebellion of Ibn-al-Ashath, A.H. 80 (699).—During the course of the campaigns beyond Sistan an Indian monarch named Ratbil had defeated a Moslem force by luring it into the defiles of what is now Afghanistan. To avenge this humiliation, a powerful army was despatched under Ibn-al-Ashath; but he, conceiving himself unjustly treated by Hajjaj, rebelled. Supported by his entire army, he was welcomed everywhere, and the detested Hajjaj fled from Basra, where the Pretender was received as Caliph. Hajjaj, however, collected an army in Syria, and Ibn-al-Ashath was defeated and escaped to Kerman. Ultimately he took refuge with Ratbil, who to please Hajjaj put him to death.

The Rebellion of Musa ibn Khazim.—The state of anarchy which prevailed in Khorasan and the loose nature of Arab authority make it almost impossible to give within reasonable compass a consecutive and intelligible narrative of events. They may be illustrated by the career of Musa, son of Khazim. Owing to tribal feuds he sought refuge at Samarcand, and he then obtained possession of the province of Termez, which he ruled for fifteen years. In the end he was attacked by a large force and slain.

Death and Character of Abdul Malik.—The reign of Abdul Malik, albeit a stormy one, marked the culminating point of the Omayyad dynasty. Successful on the whole, he was undoubtedly an able ruler, with a conciliatory policy, but he owed much to the brilliant abilities of Hajjaj. The Arab chroniclers mention that during his reign the Caliphate first minted a coinage, and also that the accounts of the exchequer were first conducted in Arabic instead of Persian, which must have involved a serious loss of influence to the subject race.

The Campaigns in Central Asia, A.H. 86–96 (705–714).—Under Welid, the son and successor of Abdul Malik, the Moslem arms penetrated farther and farther east-

wards, substituting conquest for what had hitherto been little more than raids. Kutayba,[1] who ably conducted these operations in Central Asia, chose Merv for his headquarters, and every year made a successful campaign, generally crossing the Oxus and sometimes the Jaxartes. Balkh, Tokharistan, and Ferghana were his first objective; then the fall of Baykand, a trading centre in Bokhara, secured for him booty of inestimable value. In A.H. 90 (709) the city of Bokhara itself was taken. A rising occupied Kutayba's energies in the following year, but he was soon free to attack Ratbil in Sistan. In A.H. 93 (712) he turned his arms towards Khiva, where after gaining a success he heard that Samarcand was in the hands of rebels. Leading his veterans by forced marches, he began the siege of that city, whose king on the arrival of battering-engines lost heart, and peace was made on the terms that a heavy tribute should be paid and a levy of horsemen supplied. The conqueror was allowed to enter Samarcand, where he destroyed the fire temples and built a mosque, but he broke his plighted word and retained the city as a Moslem possession. In the last two years of this eventful decade Kutayba reached Kashgar. A curious legend of this campaign has been preserved, according to which the Arab general swore to take possession of the soil of China. The "King" (probably the frontier governor) released him from this oath by sending him a load of soil to trample on, a bag of Chinese money to symbolize tribute, and four royal youths on whom he imprinted his seal. The whole story has a delightful touch of reality.

The Advance to the Indus, A.H. 89–96 (707–714).—During the reign of Welid the Moslem hosts, under Mohamed ibn Kasim, the first Arab to make his mark in India, pushed into Sind from Makran and captured Multan, where the value of the spoil was estimated at 120,000,000 pieces. The death of Welid put an end to any farther advance, but the Moslems remained in Sind permanently. There, so long as tribute was duly paid, they allowed the worship of idols in direct violation of the Prophet's order.

[1] The campaigns of Kutayba are detailed with some fulness in *The Heart of Asia.*

The Achievements of Welid, A.H. 86–96 (705–714).—The short reign of Welid was one of essential grandeur, marking as it does the zenith of Moslem power. If a comparison be desired, it may be said that Abdul Malik compares with Kobad and Welid with Noshirwan. His victorious armies marched to the frontiers of China and to the Indus; while in the West the conquest of Spain was an even more splendid and substantial achievement. Much of the credit for these great gains was due to the personality of the Caliph, whose authority was supreme and whose word was law from the frontiers of China to the Atlantic.

The Campaigns of Yezid in Gurgan and Tabaristan, A.H. 98 (716).—Yezid, son of Muhallab, was appointed Governor of Khorasan to succeed Kutayba, who upon the succession of Sulayman to the Caliphate had rebelled and been killed. Yezid's arms were directed in the first instance against Gurgan,[1] the ancient Hyrcania, which with neighbouring Tabaristan had maintained its independence, although it lay across the direct route from Irak to Central Asia. Yezid captured Dihistan, and drove the inhabitants of Gurgan into the Elburz, where they were finally forced to submit; after butchering many prisoners and ravaging the country he invaded Tabaristan, the modern Mazanderan. In this campaign he at first successfully marched through the plain country and occupied Sari. A battle was fought in which the Moslems routed the enemy, but being lured into an ambush they suffered such severe losses that Yezid was glad to purchase his safe retreat for 300,000 dinars. Returning to Gurgan, which had revolted, he besieged its prince for seven months in a stronghold situated on a mountain top which was accessible by only one route. This was probably Kala Maran, to which I have already referred in connexion with the Parthian capital. In the end he made prisoners of the garrison, and was able to fulfil a dreadful vow similar to that of Khalid by grinding wheat into flour for his bread with the blood of his victims, thousands of whom also were impaled along the roads leading to the city.

[1] For the campaign in Tabaristan, *vide* Ibn Isfandiyar's *History of Tabaristan*, by Prof. E. G. Browne (Gibb Memorial). The Arabic form of Gurgan is Jurjan.



From a photograph by Major J. W. Watson.

THE GURGAN DEFILE.

Khorasan under the Caliphate of Omar II., A.H. 99–101 (717–720).—Sulayman died after a short reign of less than three years, and was succeeded by the pious Omar, to whose credit lies the abolition of the curses against Ali, which must have given dire and continual offence to generations of devout Moslems. Omar improved the position of the inhabitants of Khorasan, many of whom, though converted to Islam, suffered none the less on that account from the exactions of the tax collector. Sending for representatives of the oppressed, the Caliph himself went into their case, dismissed the Governor, and laid down that all Moslems should be placed on terms of perfect equality. He enjoined justice towards the Persians who remained Zoroastrians, forbidding the destruction of their fire temples though not permitting the erection of new pyres.

The Reign of Yezid II., A.H. 101–105 (720–724).—Omar II. was succeeded by Yezid II.,[1] son of Abdul Malik. But the new Caliph had first to crush a rebellion raised by his namesake the son of Muhallab, who had seized Irak, and so far made good his position that governors ruled in his name in Fars, Kerman, and other centres in Persia. Maslama, the Caliph's brother, was selected to lead the Syrian army, which defeated the rebels, Yezid, their chief, being killed in the battle. His brothers, who fled by sea to the Kerman province, were put to death and their families were sold as slaves. As a reward for his great services Maslama was appointed Governor of both Irak and Khorasan. To the latter province he sent his son-in-law Said, an effeminate man quite out of place as Warden of the Marches. In spite of Moslem expeditions there was a general rising of the hordes in Khojand and Ferghana, and the Soghdians, who remained loyal, suffered considerably before help could be afforded them. When troops arrived on the scene they attacked the Soghdians, who had by that time broken away from their allegiance, and there was much indecisive fighting and raiding. Altogether during the reign of Yezid II. the decadence of the Omayyad dynasty becomes more marked.

[1] The examination by this Caliph of the first recorded English traveller to the East is related in Chapter LII.

The Abbasid Propaganda.—It was about this period that Mohamed, great-grandson of Abbas, the uncle of the Prophet, began to advance the pretensions of the Hashimite branch of the Kureish. To conciliate the Shia party, it was claimed that the rights of the house of Ali had been surrendered and merged in the Abbasid representatives, and emissaries from Mohamed, who lived in a retreat in the wilds of Palestine, began to visit Khorasan, where their Hashimite propaganda found a fruitful soil. The pioneers were put to death, but the cause prospered nevertheless, and gained many adherents throughout Persia and Irak.

The Rebellion of Zayd, A.H. 122 (740).—The Abbasid party was greatly strengthened by the attempt of Zayd, a grandson of Husayn, to raise a rebellion. The Kufans, true to their record, covenanted with him but failed him when he raised his standard. He died fighting bravely, and with him the cause of the Shias was lost for the time being, while the opposition to the Omayyad dynasty became more united in favour of the house of Abbas.

The Caliphate of Hisham, A.H. 105–125 (724–743).—During the comparatively long reign of Hisham the decline of the Omayyad dynasty continued. I have mentioned briefly the only incidents which directly concern Persia. But the fact should not be overlooked that it was during the Caliphate of Hisham that the Moslems invaded France. For Europe the issue of the battle won by Charles Martel in A.D. 732, exactly a century after the death of the Founder of Islam, was of supreme importance. As Lord Houghton wrote :

> Think if the arm of Charles Martel
> Had failed upon the Plain of Tours !
> That fate whose course we know so well,
> That foul subjection, had been ours.
> Where then had been the high renown
> France can from sire to son deliver,
> Where English freedom, rolling down,
> One broadening, one continuous river.[1]

---

[1] Quoted from the *Spectator* of October 5, 1912. I have to thank its editor for the identification of the quotation.

Welid II. and Yezid III., A.H. 125–126 (743–744).—The last Caliphs of the Omayyad dynasty call for little mention. Welid, a profligate ruler, was killed by his cousin Yezid, who himself died a few months later. The whole of the Moslem world was in a state of anarchy, during which Ibrahim, the successor of Mohamed, worked strenuously to advance the Abbasid cause.

The Rebellion of Ibn Muavia, A.H. 126–129 (744–747).—During the Caliphate of Merwan II., who succeeded Yezid III., there were various insurrections in Syria, which were crushed with the vindictive cruelty that was now usual. Of greater importance was the rebellion of Ibn Muavia, a descendant of Jafar, brother of Ali. Upon the accession of Merwan the Pretender was acknowledged at Kufa, but, being deserted by its ever fickle inhabitants, he retreated to Madain, where thousands rallied to his standard. With this force and the support of the Kharijites, Ibn Muavia established himself at Istakhr, and his Governors ruled in Isfahan, and in Rei and Kumis. In A.H. 129 (747) the Pretender was defeated by the Syrian troops and, like other pretenders, fled to Khorasan. The famous Abu Muslim, of whom we shall hear more very shortly, was at this time established at Merv, nominally in the interests of the Hashimite section of the Kureish, but actually as the agent of the house of Abbas. Ibn Muavia not unnaturally looked to him for support, but was put to death by the Governor of Herat, on Abu Muslim's orders.

The Raising of the Black Standard in Khorasan, A.H. 129 (747).—Everywhere the weakening control of the central power allowed the Arabs to waste their strength in internal feuds, and alike in Spain in the extreme west, in Africa, in Syria, and in Irak the situation was most gloomy for the Caliph. In Khorasan too the able Governor Nasr who had proved his military capacity by defeating and capturing Kursul the Khakan, was opposed by the Yemenite faction, and the ceaseless quarrel between Modhar and Yemen convulsed Khorasan as much as it was convulsing Spain.

At this juncture Abu Muslim raised the black standard

of the house of Abbas, which bore the following inscription from the Koran: "Permission to fight is accorded to those who take up arms because they have been unjustly treated." This remarkable man, destined to overthrow the Omayyad dynasty and to set the house of Abbas in its stead, was purchased as a slave at Mecca by Mohamed, the head of the Abbasid family. Showing conspicuous ability, he was employed as a confidential agent, and constantly travelled between Southern Palestine and his native province Khorasan. It was in consequence of his reports that active steps were taken. Intrigues conducted with consummate skill resulted in the capture of both Herat and Merv. Nasr reported that 200,000 men had sworn allegiance to Abu Muslim, and concluded his appeal for help against the growing movement with the following celebrated verses:

> I see amidst the embers the glow of fire, and it
> wants but little to burst into a blaze,
> And if the wise ones of the people quench it not,
> its fuel will be corpses and skulls.
> Verily fire is kindled by two sticks, and verily
> words are the beginning of warfare.
> And I cry in amazement, "Would that I knew
> whether the House of Omayya were awake or asleep!"

Merwan attempted to send reinforcements to his Viceroy, and he arrested Ibrahim, who henceforth disappears from the scene; but Abul Abbas and Abu Jafar, Ibrahim's brothers, escaped to Kufa, where they were protected and remained in hiding.

Meanwhile Kahtaba, the able general of Abu Muslim, had twice defeated Nasr, at Nishapur and again at Gurgan. Worn out and a fugitive, Nasr fled through Rei and died before reaching Hamadan. Kahtaba, following close behind, entered Rei, defeated the Caliph's army, which had marched up from Kerman, and took Nahavand. He then avoided Ibn Hobaya at Jalola and descended into Irak. The Syrian General, however, forestalled him and fell back on Kerbela. An encounter followed near that city, when Kahtaba defeated the army of the Caliph but lost his own life. Under his son, Ibn Kahtaba, Kufa was

taken, and Abul Abbas, emerging from hiding, was after a time proclaimed Caliph by the victorious army.

The Battle of the Great Zab, A.H. 132 (750).—While this struggle was going on, another force, detached by Kahtaba from Nahavand, defeated the troops of Merwan's son Abdulla and occupied Upper Mesopotamia. The Caliph, who lived at Harran, at last took the field in person, crossed the Tigris, and marched down its left bank with an army 120,000 strong. He crossed the Zab by a bridge, intending to fight a decisive battle with the Abbasid forces commanded by Abdulla, uncle of Abul Abbas. To stimulate the avaricious Arabs Merwan told them that he had brought treasures with which to reward them. This caused a movement towards the camp on the part of some of the tribesmen which was mistaken for flight. A panic ensued and the entire army fled, thousands being drowned in the Great Zab. From the field of battle the victors advanced on Mosul and the unfortunate Merwan was hunted down and killed. With him perished the Omayyad dynasty.

The Condition of Persia under the Omayyad Dynasty.—In this chapter I have given as far as possible the history of Persia as a province of the Moslem Empire. In a period of universal tyranny and oppression, when tyrants like Hajjaj represented the Caliph, it is certain that the Persian people were worse treated than under the first four Caliphs, who invariably attempted to secure justice and to repress tyranny and corruption. The inhabitants of Khorasan were largely instrumental in the overthrow of the Omayyad dynasty. It was among them that the Abbasid agents found their most devoted followers, and we have the remarkable spectacle of a people risking life and property to serve a man of an alien race whom they had never seen, and serving him with rare fidelity and devotion. It was this spirit inspiring the followers of the Black Standard which enabled them to overcome the Arabs of Syria, who were lukewarm so far as the Caliph was concerned, and thought merely of their personal, or at most their tribal interests. Conse-

quently, in a sense the victory won by the men of Khorasan may be regarded as a sign of national awakening on the part of the oppressed Persians, who must have been conscious that in all that made for civilization they were superior to their Arab masters.



61

Abu Muslim.

CHAPTER XLIX

PERSIAN ASCENDANCY IN THE EARLY ABBASID PERIOD

The ascendancy of the Persians over the Arabs, that is to say of the conquered over the victors, had already for a long while been in course of preparation; it became complete when the Abbasids, who owed their elevation to the Persians, ascended the throne. These princes made it a rule to be on their guard against the Arabs, and to put their trust only in foreigners, Persians, especially those of Khorasan, with whom, therefore, they had to make friends.
—Dozy, *Histoire d'Islamisme.*

The End of Moslem Unity.—The Omayyad dynasty and the empire of Islam were interchangeable terms, but this is not true of the Abbasid dynasty, which was never acknowledged in Spain and from the first but intermittently in Africa. In Persia, as will be seen, independent dynasties arose as the Caliph grew weak, until the appalling cataclysm of the Mongol invasion, sweeping across Iran, ended the degenerate house of Abbas and with it the Caliphate.

A second fact of special importance, so far as Persia is concerned, is that the Abbasids owed their success to armies raised in Khorasan, on which they relied to maintain the dynasty against the Arabs. The martial vigour of the latter had naturally deteriorated, owing to the luxury which their extraordinary successes had induced and the system whereby they were maintained, without working, at the expense of the Moslem empire, just as in later days the Manchus were maintained in China. So hostile was the dynasty to the Arabs that Abu Muslim's orders from Ibrahim, the brother of Abul Abbas, were to "see that there be not one left in Khorasan whose tongue

is the tongue of the Arabian, but he be slain." Strange orders these from a member of the Kureish tribe!

The Accession of Abul Abbas, A.H. 132 (749).—After the victory of Kahtaba in the neighbourhood of Kufa, Abu Salma, an agent of the Hashimite cause in Khorasan, took possession of Kufa and governed under the title of "Vizier of the house of Mohamed." The two brothers of Ibrahim who had been in hiding now emerged. Abul Abbas was the younger, but of a noble mother, and consequently his claims were held to be greater than those of Abu Jafar, whose mother was a slave-girl. It might have been expected that the proclamation of Abul Abbas as Caliph would immediately follow, but Abu Salma continually delayed until his hand was forced by members of the Abbasid party who brought Abul Abbas to the Great Mosque. There he ascended the pulpit and inveighed against the infamous Omayyads, who had usurped the rights of the Prophet. He is said to have ended his fierce denunciations by exclaiming, "I am the Great Avenger and my name is *Saffah*, 'the Shedder of Blood.'" By this title Abul Abbas is known in history, although it is not certain that he conferred it upon himself.

The Massacre of the Omayyads.—The title of the Caliph was made good by acts of ferocity directed against the many members of the fallen dynasty. Every scion of the house was hunted for his life. In Palestine the uncle of the Caliph added treachery to cruelty. He proclaimed an amnesty and confirmed it by a feast to ninety members of the family. When all were seated a poet declaimed against the evil deeds of the Omayyad house, and at this signal they were murdered to a man. A carpet was drawn over the ninety corpses and the banquet was resumed! One of the family, born under a lucky star, escaped the general slaughter, and after wandering as a refugee in Africa was invited to reign in Spain, where he founded a new Omayyad dynasty which attained considerable splendour.

The Reign of Abul Abbas and his Death, A.H. 136 (754).—The reign of Abul Abbas was stormy throughout,



THE PROVINCES OF THE ABBASID CALIPHATE



SHOWING THE CHIEF HIGH ROADS

and it may have been due to his cruelty that a rebellion broke out in Syria and Mesopotamia, where large armies still supported the Omayyad cause. Basra, too, defied the Khorasan troops of the Hashimite general, and had there been a master-mind to give unity to these efforts it might have gone hard with the house of Abbas; but none such was to be found. Ibn Hobayra clung to Wasit at a time when his army might have saved the Omayyad cause in Syria, and he was induced to capitulate. The Khorasan veterans at length captured Basra, and although in Khorasan and other outlying provinces risings occurred, the Abbasid dynasty was before long firmly established.

The treachery and ingratitude of Abul Abbas were displayed in the assassination of Abu Salma, who was waylaid when returning from a feast given in his honour by the Caliph. Shortly afterwards Abul Abbas himself died of small-pox. The five years of his reign had been marked by massacres, treachery, perjury, and ingratitude on a scale unprecedented in the annals of Islam.

Abu Jafar, Mansur, A.H. 136–158 (754–775).—Abu Jafar, who succeeded to the Caliphate and assumed the title of *Mansur* or Victorious, was faced with a serious rebellion headed by his uncle Abdulla, the Conqueror of Merwan. Abu Muslim was sent to oppose him, and the Pretender in desperation butchered 17,000 Khorasan troops whom he knew he could not trust. Abu Muslim in the end succeeded, and Abdulla was taken prisoner and placed in custody at Basra.

The Execution of Abu Muslim, A.H. 137 (754).—Just as Abul Abbas had planned the assassination of Abu Salma, so the ungrateful Mansur determined to kill the too-powerful Abu Muslim. The latter, suspecting treachery, asked one of his friends how he thought he stood with the Caliph. The friend replied in a parable. "A lion had his foot pierced by a thorn, so that it was unable to move; and a simple-minded, well-meaning man, seeing its weakness and hearing its moaning, took pity on it, approached it, and drew forth the thorn from its foot. Thereupon the lion slew the man; 'for,' it said,

'thou art a meddlesome fellow, and perhaps thou may'st assist some other lion, and it may drive me from my hunting ground.'" Abu Muslim replied that, if he ceased to care for the tender sapling he had planted, passers-by would pluck it up. He thereupon returned to Court, where, after listening to reproaches from the Caliph in the most violent terms, he was cut to pieces. Thus perished, at the early age of thirty-five, the man to whose genius and devotion the house of Abbas mainly owed its success. Retribution may have been due for the blood of thousands of opponents slain by his orders, but he had served his masters with consistent loyalty and rare devotion, and his fate brands Abu Jafar as guilty of the blackest ingratitude.

The Rebellions in Persia, A.H. 138 (756), *and* A.H. 141–143 (758–760).—In A.H. 138 (756) a rebellion broke out in Persia, Sindbad, a follower of the old religion, having collected a force to avenge his master Abu Muslim, who, he stated, upon being threatened by Mansur, had pronounced the "Most Great Name" of God, and had flown away in the form of a white dove. For some three months Sindbad held the country from Rei to Nishapur, and the rebellion was not crushed until sixty thousand of his followers had been killed. Three years later the Governor of Khorasan rebelled, but was defeated by Ibn Khuzayma, with whom was associated Mehdi, the Caliph's son and eventual successor. It is an indication of the growing importance of Khorasan that Mehdi was afterwards appointed its Governor. The *Sipahbud*[1] of Tabaristan, with whom Sindbad had taken refuge after his defeat, and to whose care the treasure of Abu Muslim had been entrusted, also rebelled, with the result that Tabaristan was conquered by the Moslems and the *Sipahbud* in despair took poison.

The Ravandis, A.H. 141 (758).—It was about this time that a strange Persian sect which believed in the transmigration of souls and held that the Caliph was temporarily inhabited by the Deity, suddenly invaded the palace of Mansur, crying out, "It is the house of our

[1] *Vide* Chapter XLIII.



From a photograph by the Author.

TIMURI NOMADS.

Lord, he that giveth us food to eat and water to drink." The Caliph, relying on his own authority to quell the tumult, imprisoned their leaders, whereupon they stormed the prison and nearly killed him. These fanatics, who were called Ravandis from the town of Ravand near Isfahan, continued to exist until the beginning of the tenth century. They were, curiously enough, the cause of the institution of a "sentry horse," which thenceforward was always kept ready saddled at Court for an emergency.

The Rebellion of the Descendants of Hasan, A.H. 144 (761).—A much more serious danger than the rebellions in Persia threatened Mansur when Medina and Basra rose to support the claims of the house of Ali. The rebellious cities were dealt with one after the other, and at Medina the Pretender was deserted and fell fighting. His brother Ibrahim took possession of Basra and then of Kufa, but he, too, fell in battle after almost winning the day, and his army broke up and dispersed.

The Foundation of Baghdad, A.H. 145 (762).—Mansur was the founder of Baghdad, which under his grandson Haroun-al-Rashid was destined to enshrine the imperishable memories of the romantic East as recorded in the glowing pages of the *Arabian Nights*. In forming the new city he had the statesmanlike design of removing the army from the neighbourhood of Kufa and Basra, which were hotbeds of intrigue ; and by reason of its position a few miles above the ancient Madain, and the permanent establishment of the Court within its walls, it soon became the capital of the Empire. Cantonments were built on the eastern bank of the river, with three separate camps, for the Khorasan levies on which Mansur depended and for the Yemen and Modhar tribes.

The Rising at Herat, A.H. 150 (767).—The latter years of the reign of Mansur were comparatively peaceful. There was a rising at Herat under Ustad or "Master Craftsman" Sis, who declared himself a prophet, and occupied Khorasan and Sistan until Ibn Khuzayma defeated him with heavy slaughter. Perhaps the chief importance of the event lies in the fact that the rebel's

daughter Khayzran was taken by Mehdi into his harem, and became the mother of Hadi and of Haroun.

Persian Influence under Mansur.—During the long reign of Mansur Persian influence became more and more marked. The Court dress was Persian, and literature, medicine, and astronomy began to be studied under the patronage of the Caliph, who was specially interested in astrology. Moreover, the Caliphate, which possessed no good traditions of administration on which to rely, adopted the same system as that by which the Sasanian monarchs had ruled. Chief of the great officers was the Vizier. The first holder of that title, as has been already mentioned, was Abu Salma. He was assassinated and his immediate successor was poisoned. The office then passed to the famous Barmecides or descendants of Barmak, a title borne by the high priest of the great fire-temple of Balkh, who was their ancestor. The Barmecides ruled for more than fifty years (A.D. 752–804), and by their splendid abilities and generous patronage of learning and science created the golden period of the Abbasid dynasty.

Mehdi, A.H. 158–169 (775–785).—Mansur during his lifetime had appointed Mehdi his successor, and when he died the reaction from his harsh and gloomy rule found expression in praises of Mehdi, who is described as "the brilliant moon in beauty; the spring-time from his perfumes and suavity; the lion by his courage; and the sea, with its resounding waves, is the emblem of his munificence and generosity." Nor were these praises wholly unmerited; for the new Caliph inaugurated his reign by deeds of mercy, and steadily developed the Empire, improving communications, fortifying important centres, founding towns and villages, and encouraging poetry, literature, and music. On the other hand, there must be laid to his charge instances of cruelty to his ministers and generals, and the fact that he organized a persecution of the Manichaeans, even establishing a special department to deal with these heretics.

The Veiled Prophet of Khorasan, A.H. 158–161 (774–777).—To the beginning of Mehdi's reign belong the

incidents made familiar to English readers in Moore's well-known poem. Its hero, Mokanna, known as *Hakim Burkai*, or "the Physician with the face-veil," was born at Karez, which is now a squalid village on the road between Meshed and Herat. He taught the immanence of the Deity in Adam, in Abu Muslim, whose name was still intensely revered, and in himself.[1] For four years he held Central Asia, until, being besieged and seeing no hope, he cast himself into a tank of vitriol.

Hadi, A.H. 169–170 (785–786).—Mehdi's favourite son was Haroun, who had gained much glory in a campaign to the Bosphorus in A.H. 156, and he wished to pass over his elder son Musa, better known as Hadi ; but the latter refused to renounce his rights, and on the sudden death of Mansur he was proclaimed Caliph without opposition. His reign, however, was short and unimportant, and when he died, after ruling for about a year, he was succeeded by his brother, who has achieved enduring fame as Haroun-al-Rashid, or "Aaron the Upright." Under him the golden age of Islam was ushered in.

[1] Browne points out the essential identity of all these sects and gives details in vol. i. chap. ix. of his work.



MAMUN AND THE IMAM RIZA.

CHAPTER L

THE GOLDEN AGE OF ISLAM

It was a dynasty abounding in good qualities, richly endowed with generous attributes, wherein the wares of Science found a ready sale, the merchandise of Culture was in great demand, the observances of Religion were respected, charitable bequests flowed freely . . . and the frontiers were bravely kept.—AL-FAKHRI, on the Abbasid Dynasty.

The Splendour of Haroun-al-Rashid, A.H. 170–193 (786–809).—

Adown the Tigris I was borne,
By Bagdat's shrines of fretted gold,
High-walled gardens green and old ;
True Mussulman was I and sworn,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

These lines from Tennyson indicate both the magnificence of the golden age of Islam and its close association with Haroun, the Solomon of the Abbasid dynasty. Bold and of active habit, the great Caliph took part in the campaigns waged against the Byzantine Empire, and during his reign Moslem fleets fought successfully in the Mediterranean. Everywhere Islam was in the ascendant.

It is of much interest to note that Charlemagne despatched an embassy to Haroun, composed of two Christians and a Jew, the latter presumably the interpreter, who sought for easier access to the Holy Sepulchre and wished to foster trade with the Caliphate. The return gifts from Haroun included an elephant, the first to be

seen in Western Europe for many centuries, and upon the instructions of the Caliph the Patriarch of Jerusalem sent the keys of the Holy Sepulchre to Charlemagne. Haroun, at the request of the Frank ambassadors, not only protected Western pilgrims who visited the Holy Land, but even built a hospice for their entertainment, a convincing proof of his broad outlook. From Chinese sources we learn that an embassy was also sent by Haroun to the Emperor of China. But these embassies were mere incidents unrecorded by the Arab chroniclers, who love to dilate on the splendour of the Caliph's Court and the number of philosophers, doctors of law, poets, and other learned men who assembled there and inaugurated a period which reached its zenith under Mamun. It was the lavish generosity of Haroun, who rewarded a poet for a sonnet by a gift of 5000 pieces of gold, ten Greek slave girls, a horse, and a robe of honour, that drew men of letters to his Court. The main credit for this movement is due to him, though, to some extent, he was following in the footsteps of his father.

The Hasanite Prince of Daylam, A.H. 176 (792).—Nevertheless there was another side to Haroun's character. The case of Yahya, a descendant of the Imam Hasan, shows that, with all his great qualities, he was not free from the treachery of his family. Yahya had gained possession of Daylam, a district to the west of Resht now termed Talish, and grew so powerful and maintained so brilliant a court that the jealousy of the Caliph was excited. Fazl, the Barmecide Governor of Persia, was sent to attack him with a large army, but terms were made and a document was drawn up and sealed, according to which Yahya was to visit Baghdad and there receive honourable treatment. The Caliph, upon the arrival of the Prince, treated him with honour and made him costly presents, but shortly afterwards discovered a flaw in the document and threw him into prison.

The Downfall of the Barmecides.—The fall of the Barmecides is one of the best known events in Oriental history, so powerful and distinguished were the family,

and above all so generous. Yahya, son of Khalid, had handed over his offices to his two sons, Fazl and Jafar, who between them ruled the Empire. Jafar was the special friend and boon companion of Haroun, who, being deeply attached to his sister Abbasa, wished for her presence also when the two were together. But by Moslem custom this was out of the question, and in order to overcome the difficulty Abbasa was married to Jafar,[1] on the express understanding, however, that the marriage was to be only nominal. But, as might have been expected, this artificial arrangement failed, and Abbasa, who was deeply enamoured of her husband, visited him in the disguise of a slave and bore him a child. Haroun was furious at what he probably regarded as high treason, and put Jafar to death ; Yahya and Fazl were imprisoned, and both died before their ungrateful master. No great family has ever excited more sympathy in its misfortunes, and the tragedy made a deep impression, which has been preserved for us in the lament of poets and annalists of the time.

The Death of Haroun-al-Rashid, A.H. 193 (809).—In A.H. 193 (809) the Caliph marched in person to crush a rebellion which, breaking out in Samarcand under the leadership of a certain Rafi, had spread far and wide. Haroun, although but forty-three years old, was prematurely worn out, and grew worse as he moved slowly eastwards. He informed his physician of his disease, but added: "Have a care that thou keep it secret ; for my sons are watching the hour of my decease, as thou mayest see by the shuffling steed they will now mount me on, adding thus to mine infirmity." There is pathos in these words, but sympathy is checked by the knowledge that Haroun's last act was to have the brother of the rebel chief slain in his presence. Shortly afterwards the great Caliph passed away. He was buried where he died, in a garden, and a few years later the Imam Riza was laid to rest under the

[1] A curious instance of a nominal marriage came under my notice at Kerman. An old lady of seventy who managed her own affairs was much inconvenienced by the fact that she had to remain veiled in front of her steward. To obviate this, she married his infant son, and as by this act she became the steward's daughter-in-law she could unveil before him. Truly a *mariage de convenance* !

same dome, and round the tombs has sprung up the city of Meshed. As I write these lines, I am sitting in the British Consulate-General, little more than one thousand yards from Haroun-al-Rashid's grave.

Amin and Mamun, A.H. 193–198 (808–813).—Haroun, like Cyrus the Great, made the fatal mistake of dividing the Empire. Amin, the son of Zobayda, was nominated heir-apparent during his father's lifetime, and Abdulla, surnamed Mamun, or "The Trusted," son of a Persian wife, was declared to be the next successor and was given the government of the Caliphate east of Hamadan, just as Bardiya, the brother of Cambyses, was appointed ruler of the Eastern provinces of the Empire of the Achaemenians. In anticipation of the death of Haroun, the heir-apparent had despatched an agent with the army to Khorasan. On the demise of the Caliph the agent produced two letters sealed by Amin. By the terms of the first, Mamun was instructed to have the oath of allegiance sworn to both brothers (Amin and Mamun), but by the terms of the second the army, which had been bequeathed to Mamun, was ordered to return to Baghdad; this order was promptly executed as the families of the soldiers were in the power of Amin.

Mamun proclaimed Caliph of the East, A.H. 196 (811).—The brothers consequently started on bad terms, and Mamun, under the guidance of Fazl ibn Sahl, a recent Persian convert to Islam, strengthened his position in Khorasan, where his Persian blood gave rise to the saying, "Son of our Sister, he is one of ourselves and an Abbasid to boot." His able general, Harthama, captured Samarcand, Rafi submitted, and Mamun felt strong enough to declare himself Caliph of the East. Amin, on the other hand, was a weak voluptuary who lavished the revenues of the Caliphate on unworthy pleasures. But he was popular in Baghdad, where he spent huge sums of money, and where Mamun was disliked for his Persian proclivities.

The Campaigns of Tahir the Ambidextrous and the Death of Amin.—Under a court ruled by eunuchs and mistresses the army degenerated, and Amin's attempts to attack his brother were uniformly unsuccessful. A force

which he at length despatched to invade Persia was allowed to approach Rei without opposition, but there it was defeated by a smaller body under Tahir "the Ambidextrous," who slew Amin's general, Ali, with his left hand. This Tahir, a Persian by race, was the descendant of a slave who, upon securing his freedom, became a client of the Khuzai clan. He founded the Tahiri dynasty, which was to play a great part in Khorasan, and the present Amirs of Kain claim descent from him.[1]

After his victory Tahir assumed the offensive, and with the support of Harthama advanced on the capital by way of Ahwaz, defeating army after army on the way. Amin, distracted first by a rebellion in Syria and then by a conspiracy which was for a time successful, was in no position to withstand him. Receiving the allegiance of Arabia for his master, Tahir captured Wasit, and Baghdad alone remained loyal to the Caliph of the West. After a siege which lasted for a whole year the city was taken by storm. Amin, who had taken refuge in the citadel, then surrendered, and was put to death by the Khorasan soldiery.

Rebellions in the Western Half of the Caliphate, A.H. 198–201 (813–816).—But the struggle between the Persian and the Arabian halves of the Caliphate was not ended by the death of Amin. By an act of folly Tahir after his victories was removed from the supreme command in favour of Hasan, brother of Fazl, the Persian Vizier, and although he was appointed Governor of Syria and Mesopotamia instead, he was naturally disinclined to take active steps, and remained at Ricca a passive spectator of events.

Mamun apparently determined to make Merv[2] his capital and did not appear at Baghdad. In consequence, a rising was fomented at Kufa in favour of the House of Ali, and other rebellions broke out in Asia Minor and Arabia. Harthama, faithful to Mamun, travelled to

[1] *Ten Thousand Miles, etc.*, p. 399.

[2] According to Yakut, the following saying is attributed to Mamun: "There are three things at Merv which the poor enjoy as well as the rich, to wit, its delicious melons, its water, which is always fresh owing to the abundance of the snows, and its downy cotton."



THE IMAM RIZA AND THE HUNTER.

(From a Persian picture in the Author's collection.)

Merv to warn him of the dangerous position of affairs, but owing to the influence of the Vizier he was not allowed even to speak, but was hurried off to prison, where he died.

The Proclamation of Ali Riza as Heir-Apparent, A.H. 201 (817).—To meet the crisis the Caliph took an extraordinary step. In the hope of putting an end to the insurrection, he appointed as his heir-apparent Ali Riza, the head of the House of Ali, although he was twenty-two years older than himself. He promulgated an edict directing that allegiance was to be sworn to the Imam Riza, as he is generally termed, and in order to mark the new departure he ordained that the green of the Shia was to be substituted for the black of the House of Abbas. The Shias were enraptured,[1] but at Baghdad the people rose in fury to depose Mamun, and his uncle Ibrahim received homage as Caliph. When news of this serious occurrence reached Merv, Ali Riza had the nobility to warn the Caliph that his policy would break up the Empire. Mamun, realizing the truth at last, gave orders to march on Baghdad, and Fazl was assassinated in his bath at Sarakhs, probably by order of his master.

His Sudden Death, A.H. 203 (818).—At this time the Caliph gave one of his own daughters to Ali Riza and a second to Ali Riza's son, while as a further mark of favour he conferred upon one of his brothers the high honour of presiding at the annual pilgrimage to Mecca. But the catalogue of his distinctions came to an abrupt close. The Imam Riza died suddenly from a surfeit of grapes and was buried under the same dome as Haroun-al-Rashid. Rumour, accepted as truth by the Shias, represented that the grapes were poisoned, and it cannot be denied that the heir-apparent's disappearance was extremely opportune. Nevertheless, many eminent Orientalists, Beveridge among the number, believe that he died a natural death. Be this as it may, Shia pilgrims at the present day, when moving in procession round the tomb of Ali Riza, pause to cry out "Curses on Haroun

[1] In *The Glory of the Shia World*, p. 237, I have described the whole event from the Shia point of view.

and on Mamun," and thus the two most eminent and most Persophile Caliphs of the Abbasid dynasty are annually execrated by thousands who would otherwise never have heard of their existence.

Tahir, Viceroy of the East, A.H. 204–207 (819–822).—The insurrection of Ibrahim speedily collapsed, and Mamun showed mercy and an entire absence of vindictiveness towards the rebels. Tahir was appointed Viceroy of the East; but he showed signs of disloyalty and was thereupon poisoned, probably by an agent of the Caliph. But the influence he had acquired was so great that his son Talha was allowed to succeed him; and by this appointment Khorasan achieved the status of a semi-independent kingdom.

The Later Years of Mamun and his Death, A.H. 218 (833).—After his power had been established at Baghdad the position and prestige of Mamun rivalled that of his father. At the same time there was little peace within the Empire. An insurrection in Egypt took twelve years to crush, and for twenty years a brigand named Babek, who professed transmigration and other mystic doctrines, terrorized the northern provinces, holding his own in Azerbaijan, and defeating army after army sent against him.

Mamun was of the same active habit as his father, and the close of his reign found him taking the field in person against the Greeks near Tarsus, where, like Alexander the Great, he caught a chill from the cold mountain water. Less fortunate than the great Greek, however, he died from the effects of his imprudence.

The Arts, Science, and Literature under Mamun.—A mere recital of the chief events of Mamun's reign does not convey the impression of exceptional brilliance or conspicuous success. Yet all writers agree that for Islam this was the golden age of intellectual activity. The arts, literature, science, the practice of medicine were now seriously studied, and pursued with such thoroughness that it was through the vehicle of Arabic that benighted Europe became again aware of the glorious heritage of Greek science and philosophy of which it had



From a photograph by the Author.

MESHED, THE SACRED CITY OF PERSIA.

lost sight. All men of learning, whether Moslems, Jews, Christians, or Pseudo-Sabaeans,[1] were welcomed by the munificent Caliph, and search was diligently made for the works of the Greek historians, philosophers, and men of science in order that they might be translated into Arabic.

It is very interesting to observe how among Moslems the various sciences sprang up in connexion, more or less directly, with the study of the Koran. In the first place, the conversion of thousands of Persians and other conquered peoples created an urgent need for grammars and dictionaries. Then came the study of history, not only of the Arabs themselves but also of the Persians and Greeks, in order to explain the allusions to other peoples that were met with in the Koran and in old poems, which were collected and critically examined for the elucidation of rare or archaic words. But still these studies did not satisfy, and the search for knowledge was continually pushed through new and more and more divergent channels. Thirdly, an acquaintance with geography became indispensable, not only for the study of the Koran but also for the very practical purpose of organizing the rapidly expanding Empire.

Moslem Exploration and Geography.[2]—The story of Moslem exploration, although mainly commercial, is of great interest, especially that carried on by sea outside the limits of the Empire. It was but a continuation of the old maritime activity of the Arabs and Persians, in proof of which we learn that Islam was preached at Canton, among foreigners consisting mainly of Persians and Arabs, between A.D. 618 and 626. In other words, the new religion had reached China before the *Hijra*, which fact points to considerable intercourse between Arabia and China. The earliest Arab records of the trade with

[1] *Vide* Browne's interesting account of the Pseudo-Sabaeans of Harran in vol. i. p. 302 of his *op. cit.*; also the account given of the Nestorians in Chapter XXXVIII. of this work.

[2] For this section I have consulted *The Dawn of Modern Geography*, by Doctor Raymond Beazley; *Lands of the Eastern Caliphate*, by Guy le Strange; and the work of Chau Ju-Kua termed *Chu-fan-chi*, or "Description of Barbarous Peoples," translated and edited by F. Hirth and W. W. Rockhill. The two former books are valuable standard works, and the latter I have also found most useful.

China date from the ninth century. The voyages of a merchant called Sulayman and of Ibn Wahab of Basra were undertaken in the first and second half of this century respectively, and from the account of them given in the *Salsalat-al-Tawarikh*, or "Chain of Chronicles," by *Sayyid* Hasan, of Siraf in the Persian Gulf, we learn that the voyages started from this port. The route taken was by Maskat, Kulam and the Nicobar Islands, to Kalah in the Malay Peninsula, from which it was about a month's sail to Canton. So important was the foreign colony, according to Sulayman, that a Moslem was appointed at Canton by the Chinese to maintain order among his co-religionists.

Moslem travellers also traversed the Indian Ocean and probably reached Madagascar to the south, while to the north the steppes of Russia were penetrated by the same merchant-explorers. The voyages preserved to us in the "Adventures of Sindbad the Sailor," in the guise of charming stories abounding with marvels, give us a delightful picture of the world as it was known to the Moslem mariner and merchant, and are worthy of study from that point of view alone.

Among the famous Moslems may be reckoned the three great geographers, Istakhri, an inhabitant of Istakhr, Ibn Haukal, and Mukaddasi. These scientific authorities succeeded Ibn Khurdadbih,[1] the Postmaster-General of the Caliphate, who in the preceding century drew up what may best be described as a "Route Book," in which he tabulated the distances and other information concerning the various routes leading from Baghdad. The systematic geographers of the tenth century describe fully each province of the Caliphate on an ordered system, giving also the main trunk routes incidentally in connexion with their descriptions. The work of Ibn Haukal is but a new edition of the Persian geographer, with certain modifications. Istakhri treats of his native province of Fars in considerable detail, whereas Ibn Haukal treats all the provinces in the same proportion.

Mukaddasi, their contemporary, "wrote his geography

[1] *Dawn of Modern Geography*, vol. i. p. 425 ff.

entirely on independent lines and chiefly from his personal observation of the divers provinces. His work is probably the greatest, it is certainly the most original, of all those which the Arab geographers composed."[1] It is not possible in the space at my disposal to give details of the trade routes which connected the Caliphate with every quarter of Europe and Asia, but I cannot omit a reference to Rei, on the great trunk route from west to east, where the Slav merchants who had descended the Volga from the north met the traders from the Levant. Elsewhere I have spoken of Persia as the "Highway of the Nations," and this fact by itself would go far to justify the description.

We now come to the science of geography. Mamun "created the first true school of geographical science which had been seen since the days of the Antonines. . . . An observatory was founded at Baghdad where attempts were made to determine the obliquity of the ecliptic. Once again Mamun caused a simultaneous measurement to be taken, in Syria and in Mesopotamia, of a space of two degrees of the terrestrial meridian."[2]

It would be well if Europeans who are sometimes apt in ignorance to depreciate the East would contrast the state of learning, of science, of literature, and of the arts among Moslems in this century with the deep darkness which then covered Europe. It is not too much to say that in all these departments of intellectual activity the East was incomparably superior to the then benighted West, and this continued true during a period of some five hundred years; for not until the twelfth century did Christendom cease to depend on the East for its light. *Ex Oriente lux*: no aphorism ever crystallized a profounder truth.

The Mutazila Sect.—It would be improper in any account of the golden age of Islam, however brief, to pass over without at least some mention the special doctrine which won the adherence of the Caliph and his Court.[3] The Mutazila, or "Seceders," represented the

[1] *Lands of the Eastern Caliphate*, p. 13.
[2] *Dawn of Geography*, vol. i. p. 409.
[3] This brief reference is founded on chap. viii. of Browne's great work.

protest of human understanding against the tyranny of the orthodox teaching, and their tenets were in effect a cry for freedom of action. They opposed the orthodox doctrine of predestination, which represented the Deity as punishing man for sins which he had been preordained to commit. They equally opposed the dogma which made the Koran coeternal and coexistent with God. The Caliphs Mamun, Motasim, and Wathik embraced the views of this seceding sect; but instead of allowing freedom to the orthodox Moslems, they treated them with fanatical intolerance, until persecution brought about the inevitable reaction, and the political power of the sect, which under these three Caliphs had been supreme, ceased shortly after the accession of Mutawakkil, the tenth in succession of the House of Abbas.

Motasim, A.H. 218–227 (833–842).—Mamun before his death issued a rescript by the terms of which his brother Abu Ishak succeeded to the Caliphate under the title of Motasim. His reign resembled that of his brother, freedom of discussion being allowed except as regards the dogmas of the Mutazila sect, dissent from which involved the penalty of death.

The Mamelukes and the Founding of Samarra.—At the beginning of the reign of Haroun a Turkish general was appointed to supreme military command of the army operating in the West. This was forty-eight years before the accession of Motasim, and during that period thousands of Mamelukes or "owned" slaves had been imported every year from Central Asia to fill the ranks of the army and to supply the royal body-guard. Many of these men won the Caliph's favour, and gradually they displaced the Arabs, who returned to their deserts. The evils of this system were apparent from the first, but the more the Arabs resented the Caliph's foreign body-guard, the more Motasim leaned on the Turks, until in course of time they usurped all power and authority; ultimately they founded the Mameluke dynasty of Egypt.

The legend runs that the Caliph when riding one day in Baghdad was accosted by an old Arab Shaykh, who

complained in homely but forcible language that there was no escape from the insolence and rapine of the Turks. This so upset Motasim that he never again rode abroad in Baghdad, but founded a new city at Samarra, some sixty miles above the capital.

The Revolt of the Jatt or Gypsies.—Under the orders of Walid I., at the beginning of the eighth century of our era, a large number of Jatt, termed Zott by the Arabs, had been transported with their buffaloes from the lower Indus to the marches of the Tigris.[1] As soon as they were firmly established there they began to rob and to kill. By closing the Basra-Baghdad road they raised the cost of food in the capital, and compelled successive Caliphs to send armies to subdue them. Their insolence is expressed in the following poem, preserved in the pages of Tabari :

> O inhabitants of Baghdad die ! May your dismay last long ! . . .
> It is we who have defeated you, after having forced you
> to fight us in the open country.
> It is we who have driven you in front of us
> like a flock of weaklings.

Mamun's generals were unsuccessful in dealing with the elusive scourge, and Motasim's first care was to send Ojayf, a trusted Arab general, to subdue this alien people. Ultimately, in A.H. 220 (834), Ojayf succeeded in his task by cutting their communications. The Zott surrendered, and after being exhibited in boats to the delighted citizens of Baghdad, wearing their national garb and playing their musical instruments, were exiled to Khanikin on the Turkish frontier—now a stage on the Teheran road—and to the frontiers of Syria, whither they proceeded, taking with them their buffaloes. These useful animals they can claim to have introduced into the Near East and into Europe.

The Capture of Babek, A.H. 222 (837).—Motasim's most successful general was Afshin, who, after two years

[1] I would refer to the deeply interesting *Mémoire sur les migrations des Tsiganes à travers l'Asie* by Professor de Goeje. Some years ago, I collected vocabularies of the Gypsy dialect in both the Kerman and the Khorasan provinces ; *vide Journal Anthropological Institute*, vol. xxxii., 1902, p. 339, and vol. xxxvi., July–December, 1906.

of hard fighting in the neighbourhood of Ardebil, destroyed the power of Babek. This man had been a scourge of the Caliphate for twenty years, in the course of which he had defeated six armies and occasioned the slaughter of a quarter of million men and taken thousands of men and women prisoners. After his final defeat by Afshin, Babek fled, but was handed over to the Caliph by an Armenian prince with whom he had taken sanctuary, and was put to a cruel death.

The account of his execution and that of his brother practically terminates Tabari's valuable history. The historian himself was born two years after this incident, but he only briefly summarizes the events of his own time.

The Campaign against the Greeks, A.H. 223 (838).—Like Mamun, Motasim was a man of energy and active habit, and when he heard that the Greeks were ravaging Syria he asked which was their strongest fortress. Being told Amorium, he advanced on it with a powerful army. Theophilus, the Greek Emperor, was defeated in a pitched battle, and, as his army was not able to face the Moslems, he was doomed to inaction while Amorium was besieged. After a successful resistance for nearly two months, a weak point in the fortifications was pointed out by a renegade and the fortress was destroyed, its garrison being treated with much cruelty.

The Later Years of Motasim's Reign.—The later years of Motasim were disturbed by a conspiracy headed by Ojayf, who viewed with jealousy the increase in power of the Turks. The insurrection was put down with barbarous cruelty, and shortly afterwards Afshin fell from favour and was put to death. Although arrested for treachery and embezzlement, the religious fanaticism of Motasim caused him to be tried and condemned for holding Zoroastrian doctrines and for secret hostility to Islam.

Wathik, A.H. 227–232 (842–847).—Wathik, who succeeded his father, Motasim, in A.H. 227 (842), was the son of a Greek slave-girl. He marked his accession by "squeezing" his ministers, some of whom were beaten

"to encourage the others." Disturbances broke out in Persia, where the Kurds rebelled, and in Palestine and Syria there were dangerous risings, which, however, were put down, mainly by Turkish generals. A conspiracy caused by the intolerance of the Caliph failed, and Wathik might have reigned for many years and advanced the exploration of the countries to the North, in which he was deeply interested.[1] But his constitution had been ruined by dissipation. He suffered from incessant thirst, and the curious remedy was prescribed of exposure in an oven. The oven was overheated, possibly by design, and Wathik perished. With his short, inglorious reign the golden period of Islam came to an end.

[1] *Dawn of Modern Geography*, vol. i. p. 414.



AMR-UL-LAIS.

CHAPTER LI

THE DECAY OF THE CALIPHATE AND THE REVIVAL OF PERSIAN INDEPENDENCE

If I live, the sword shall decide between us: if I conquer, I will do as I please; if thou art victorious, bread and onions are my fare; and neither thou nor fortune can triumph over a man accustomed to such diet.—The Message of YAKUB BIN LAIS to the CALIPH MOTAMID.

The Orthodox Reaction under Mutawakkil, A.H. 232–247 (847–861).—The reign of Mutawakkil is chiefly important as marking the period of orthodox reaction. The Mutazilite doctrines were abjured and their professors in turn underwent persecution of the most cruel and vindictive nature. Equally strong was the hatred which the new Caliph displayed against the House of Ali; he even encouraged his buffoon to dress up as "The Lion of Allah," while "Behold the pot-bellied bald one, the Caliph of Islam!" was sung in derision. The tomb of Husayn was destroyed and the site ploughed up. Moreover, Mutawakkil was fanatically opposed to Jews and Christians, against whom obsolete laws were revived. They were bound to paint the figure of Satan on the door-posts of their houses, were subject to special taxes, were obliged to wear a distinctive dull yellow dress,[1] and were debarred from holding any Government appointment. Indeed, their very children were forbidden to learn Arabic.

The Palace of Samarra and the Cypress of Kishmar.—The Caliph himself was a dissolute and extravagant voluptuary, and in the neighbourhood of Samarra he

[1] The Zoroastrians of Yezd and Kerman are still obliged to wear these "honey-coloured gowns."

built a new palace which cost untold sums of money. Connected with it is the legend of Kishmar, already mentioned in Chapter IX. as the meeting-place of Zoroaster and King Gustasp. It is stated that in order to commemorate this event the Prophet of Iran planted a cypress, which grew to a prodigious size and was regarded as sacred by the Zoroastrians. The fanatical Caliph ordered the tree, which was believed by that time to be 1450 years old, to be felled, and, although large sums were offered to save it, it was cut down and transported in sections to Samarra; but according to the legend Mutawakkil was slain by his son on the day these reached the palace. The story has some value as indicating the hold that Zoroastrianism still retained in the province then known as Kuhistan. Incidentally, too, it affords some help towards fixing the date of the meeting between Zoroaster and Gustasp.

The Tahiri Dynasty, A.H. 205–259 (820–872).—Mention has already been made of Tahir, the famous general of Mamun who governed Khorasan. Under his sons Nishapur succeeded Merv as the capital of what was a semi-independent dynasty holding sway in Khorasan for over half a century. The princes of this family were unambitious and made no attempt to fish in troubled waters, and the dynasty collapsed with little resistance when attacked by the Saffarids in A.H. 259 (872). In 1909 I came across a small section of the Tahiri tribe in the district of Turshiz to the south of Nishapur; I was also informed that irrigation pipes are occasionally found stamped with the name of this dynasty.[1]

A Period of Anarchy, A.H. 247–256 (861–870).—Mutawakkil having alienated his eldest son, Muntassir, by grossly abusing him when under the influence of drink, a conspiracy of Turkish officers was formed in the interest of the heir-apparent, and the Caliph was murdered in his sleep. Muntassir succeeded, but died within a year, and a period of anarchy ensued, during which Baghdad underwent a second siege, and the Turkish soldiers made and murdered caliphs at their pleasure. Rebellions, too,

[1] *Journal R.G.S.* for February 1911.

broke out in every part of the Empire, and the disintegration of the Caliphate was hastened by the anarchy at headquarters, which paralysed all attempts at repression and left the provincial governors without support.

The Rise of the Saffar Dynasty.—During the Caliphate of Mutawakkil a certain Salih ibn Nasr collected a body of men in Sistan under the pretext of crushing an outbreak of Kharijites, and seized the province. The Tahirid prince marched to Sistan in person and succeeded in putting an end to the fighting between Salih and the Kharijites, but upon his departure Salih again took the field and was apparently allowed to hold the province without further molestation.

Among his most able adherents was a certain Yakub bin Lais, known as Saffar, or "the Coppersmith," from the trade pursued by his family. This extraordinary adventurer, who while still a boy was noted for his generosity, upon reaching manhood took to highway robbery, which has frequently been a road to distinction in Persia. His generosity and courage speedily brought him success and a large following, which he placed at the disposal of Salih, and in A.H. 247 (861), the year in which Mutawakkil was assassinated, he became commander or the army of Sistan under Salih's successor. His first success was the capture of Herat in A.H. 253 (876), and having overrun and annexed Kerman [1] and subsequently Fars, he soon became ruler of an extensive kingdom. He founded a short-lived dynasty which is remembered with much affection by Persians, both because they consider it to be the first Persian dynasty after the Arab conquest, and also because it sprang from Sistan, the home of Rustam and of the Keianian line.

Motamid, A.H. 256–279 (870–892).—After nine years of anarchy, Motamid, the eldest surviving son of Mutawakkil, was elected Caliph. The Court returned to Baghdad, where Turkish influence was less strong, and guided by Motamid's brother, Muaffak, who actually

[1] Many years ago I was allowed to see and make a précis of an old manuscript history of Bam by a certain *Sayyid* Tahir-u-Din ibn Shams-u-Din of Bam. In it Yakub and his brother are praised, the former for improving the city of Jiruft and the latter for building a mosque in it.


46
50
54
ASTRAKHAN
Gurief
Mouths of the Volga
U R A
Chamishty L.
Ft Alexandrovsk
44
CASPIAN SEA
CAUCASUS
TRANS-CASPIAN TERRITORY PROVI
Ilte-ije
Derbend
Kuba
Kara Boghaz
R. Kur
Baku
Dakly
Tuer
40
R. Aras
Krasnovodsk
Cheleken I.
Ardabil
Kizil Arvat
Bami
Sumbar R.
Enzeli
RASHT
Kizil-Uzen
Atrak R.
Shirwan
R. Gurgan
Barfrush
Sari
ASTRABAD
36
Kasvin
Amol
TEHRAN
Demavend
Damghan
Sabzawar
Firuskuh
Saveh
Samnan (Darab)
PERSIA
Tawrun
Kum
Kaschan
Bajistan
Tabbas
Isfahan
Nadjin
50
54
58
English Statute Miles
100 50 0 100 200 300

CENTRAL ASIA



London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd..

70 74 78 82

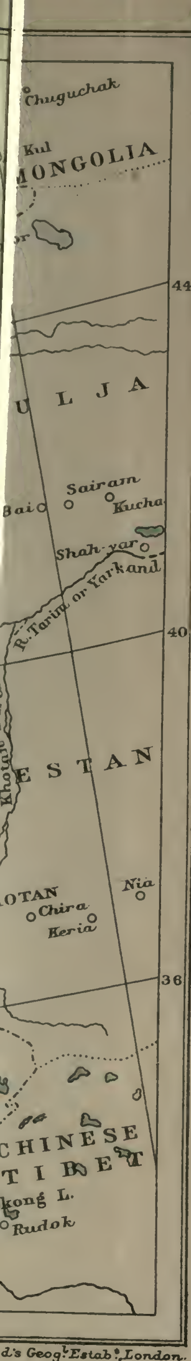
Urjarska
SEMIPALATINSK
BALKASH LAKE
Sari-su
AKMOLINSK
Kopal
Sairam Nor
R. Chu
SEMIRECHENSK
Iliisk
R. Ili
New Kul
Suzak
Chulak-kurgan
Turkestan
Kastek
Preobrachensk
Prjevalsk
Tokmak
Issik Kul
Daria or Jaxartes
R
I
A
Aulie-ata
Chemkent
Son Kul
N
A
Aksu
S
T
Uch Turfan
E
TASHKEND
R. Narin
Namangan
Chatir Kul
Andijan
Uzgent
Ush
KOKAN
Margilan
Maral-bashi
Yarkand
zak
Nau
Khojend
FERGHANA
KASHGAR
Faisabad
rgan
amarkand
Yangi-shahr
EASTERN TUR
ehr-i-Sebz
YARKAND
R
A
Kalakhumb
Kala-Wanj
Tashkurghan
Kargalik
Kulab
Kala Wamar
Guma
R. Panja
Fyzabad
lkh
KUNDUZ
Hunzar
YASIN
Nagar
-i-sherif
Heibak
GILGIT
Ghori
CHITRAL
ANISTAN
Chilas
Skardo
I
A
INDIA
Indus R.
KABUL
Kunar
Srinagar
Suru
Leh
Kabul R.
Islamabad
Padam
PESHAWUR
Attok
Rawal Pindi
Ghuzni



Greenwich 70 74 78

d..

84



Chuguchak
Kul
MONGOLIA
44
U L J A
Sairam
Bai
Kucha
Shah-yar
R. Tarim or Yarkand
40
E S T A N
Khotan
OTAN
Chira
Keria
Nia
36
CHINESE
T I B E T
kong L.
Rudok
d's Geog! Estab!, London.

ruled the Empire, the apparently moribund Caliphate regained vigour and prestige.

The Zanj Insurrection, A.H. 255–270 (869–883).—No saying is truer than that history repeats itself, and the insurrection of the Zanj or "Ethiopians" resembles closely the Servile War headed by Spartacus which convulsed the republic of Rome in the seventh decade B.C. The Persian who headed the rising pretended to be descended from Ali, and at first laid claim to a spiritual leadership, but this pretension was soon forgotten and he merely appealed to the slaves, to whom he promised liberty and plunder. After meeting with scant success in Arabia, he occupied the country round Basra, including the lower valley of the Karun, where thousands of slaves and many Beduin flocked to his standards. Again and again the imperial armies were defeated, and Basra itself was stormed by the Zanj and given over to pillage and massacre. The hordes then spread southward along both coasts of the Persian Gulf, and northward till they captured Wasit and sacked Ahwaz. At last Muaffak, who had hitherto not been free to devote his entire attention to this serious outbreak, concentrated a large force; the Zanj were surrounded in the difficult and marshy district of the lower delta, and, after fifteen years of massacre and rapine, *Khabis*, or "the Reprobate," was slain and thousands of prisoners were released.

The Brilliant Career of Yakub bin Lais.—We must here return to Yakub bin Lais and follow his career to its close. In A.H. 257 (871) he sent an envoy to Muaffak with instructions to state that his master deemed himself a humble slave of the Caliph, to whom he proposed to offer his respects in person. As it was thought desirable to keep Yakub as far away from Baghdad as possible, the Caliph bestowed on him the governments of Balkh, Tokharistan, and other distant eastern provinces. Strengthened by his appointment as a high official of the Caliphate, Yakub was everywhere victorious, even distant Kabul being captured, together with its Turkish king, who was a Buddhist. At length the Sistan adventurer was ready to attack the Tahirid prince, who had apparently

been a passive spectator of conquests which had robbed him of many of his provinces, and who offered no desperate resistance. Having mastered Khorasan, Yakub proceeded to attack neighbouring Tabaristan. At Sari he defeated Hasan bin Zayd, its independent prince of the House of Ali, but, pursuing him towards Gilan, he lost most of his men in the pestilential swamps, and perforce returned to Sistan to recruit.

Yakub was now master of half Persia, in addition to many eastern provinces, and, elated by a succession of victorious campaigns, in A.H. 262 (875) he decided to try conclusions with the Caliph himself. He began with a formal demand for the province of Fars; Motamid not only refused this, but "dismissed" the conqueror from the governorship of Khorasan. Yakub immediately advanced on Baghdad, and near the capital met Muaffak, who defeated him with heavy loss, which included his entire camp. Yakub, however, was not discouraged, but, returning to Fars, prepared to raise a new army. His self-confidence was so great that he refused with scorn an offer of assistance from the Zanj leader, which he answered in the words of the Koran, "I worship not that which ye worship; neither do ye worship that which I worship."

Three years later, in A.H. 265 (878), the Caliph sent an embassy of friendly remonstrance to Yakub. When it arrived the great adventurer lay dying, with his sword by his side and a crust and onions ready to be served for his coarse meal. In this state he received the envoy, and gave the reply which forms the heading to this chapter; shortly afterwards he died.

The Origin of the Ismaili Sect.—As stated in Chapter XLVII., the doctrine of the Imamate, by which one of the descendants of Ali must be invested with supreme spiritual leadership and was endowed with supernatural and semi-divine attributes, was a fundamental article of belief among the Shias. The first six *Imams*, as far as Jafar as-Sadik, who died in A.D. 765 during the reign of Mansur, were universally accepted, but Jafar, who had in the first instance designated his son Ismail to succeed

him, later cut him out of the spiritual succession in favour of a younger son Musa, known as Kazim. The reason for this action is stated to have been that Ismail had drunk the forbidden wine. Shortly after this, and during the lifetime of Jafar, Ismail, the disinherited son, died. This act of disinheritance divided the Shias, for, although the large majority followed Musa, a considerable minority remained faithful to Ismail or rather, as he had never been Imam, to his son Mohamed, whom they believed to be the seventh and last Imam.

The Carmathians.—The first missionary of the Ismaili faith in Irak during the Caliphate of Motazid was a certain Hamdan, surnamed Carmat, after whom the adherents of the doctrine were nicknamed Carmathians. He offered to join the Zanj leader, the "Reprobate," with one hundred thousand men, but they differed in their tenets and were unable to combine. Little seems to be known of Carmat's life, but he fell by the hands of an assassin. Later, the sons of a certain Zakaria, and after their capture and execution Zakaria himself, became leaders of the sect and engaged in savage wars.[1]

At the beginning of the fourth century of the *Hijra* Basra was stormed by Sulayman, yet another fanatic, and afterwards Kufa, and the terrible anarchy culminated in the sack of Mecca in A.H. 317 (929) and the carrying away of the Black Stone. After this the storm subsided and the sect was weakened by dissensions, but the recorded fact that in A.H. 396 (985) Multan was governed by a Carmathian shows how far its power and influence reached. These sects, all of whom fought against society, constitute one of the darkest sides to Islam. As will be seen later, their doctrines continued to be preached in Persia.

The Rise of the Samanid Dynasty.—More powerful than the Tahirid or Saffarid families, which flourished in the one case only just over, and in the other just under, half a century, was the Samanid dynasty, which endured for a century and a quarter. Its founder was Saman, a Persian nobleman of Balkh, descended from Bahram

[1] Al-biruni in his *Chronology of Ancient Nations* devotes a chapter to the eras of the Pseudo-Prophets, to which I would refer the curious reader. The best account of the Carmathians is in *Encycl. Religion and Ethics*, vol. iii. p. 222.

Chubin. Being driven away from his native town he appealed to Asad ibn Abdulla, who was governor of Khorasan under Mehdi and strongly espoused his cause. In gratitude for the help thus afforded, Saman, who had until then remained a follower of the old religion, not only became a convert to Islam, but named his son Asad as a compliment to his protector. Saman had four sons, who served Haroun and materially aided in putting down the rebellion of Rafi. Mamun in recognition of these services gave to the four brothers the governorships of Samarcand, Farghana, Shash, and Herat, and under the Tahirid dynasty these grants were confirmed.

The ablest member of the family was Ahmad, who was succeeded by his son Nasr, and it would appear that upon the downfall of the Tahirids the Samanids retained their position, probably by an arrangement made with Yakub bin Lais, though the details are obscure. At any rate, in A.H. 261, or two years after the overthrow of the Tahirids by Yakub, Nasr and his brother Ismail are found to be in possession of the provinces across the Oxus, and this year is taken as the date of the foundation of the dynasty. Ismail showed conspicuous military capacity, but the two brothers quarrelled and a civil war ensued in which Ismail emerged the victor. With remarkable generosity he permitted Nasr to retain the government until his death in A.H. 279 (892).

The Career of Amr-ul-Lais, A.H. 265–290 (878–903).—After the death of Yakub his brother Amr made peace with the Caliph and ruled Khorasan and other provinces for six years as his deputy. He was then dismissed by Motamid, who by that time felt strong enough to deal with him. But he lingered on at Nishapur, which he loved, and the following lines which are attributed to him give his lament :

> Its stones are turquoises, its bushes rhubarb,
> And its dust edible clay.[1] How could I leave such a land ?

The province, however, together with an army, was assigned to Rafi ibn Harthama, who defeated the Saffarid

[1] This is found in various parts of Khorasan and is eaten more especially by pregnant women ; *vide* "A Sixth Journey in Persia," *Journal R.G.S.*, January 1911.

and drove him back to his native Sistan. In A.H. 279 (870) Motamid was succeeded by Motazid, who, reversing his brother's policy, reappointed Amr to Khorasan. Presumably the Caliph realized his weakness and sought to play off Amr against the powerful Rafi and the still more powerful Ismail. In A.H. 283(896) Amr took possession of Nishapur, defeating Rafi, whom he captured and slew, and whose head he sent to Baghdad. Intoxicated by this success, the victor demanded that Ismail should be dismissed from Transoxiana, and the Caliph with characteristic duplicity seems to have encouraged him to attack the Samanid ruler, whom he at the same time encouraged to resist. The campaign, after a keen struggle, ended in A.H. 288 (900) in the siege and capture of Balkh, where Amr was made prisoner. One of the famous stories of the East relates to his fall. A servant, it is said, while cooking some meat for the captive leader, left the pot for a moment to procure some salt. A dog tried to snatch the meat, but the handle of the pot fell on its neck, and as it bolted, pot and all, Amr exclaimed: "This morning three hundred camels bore my kitchen, and to-night a dog has carried it off!" Amr also figures in a polo story in the *Kabus Nama*,[1] from which it appears that he was one eyed.

Ismail was prepared to treat his captive generously, but the Caliph insisted on his being sent to Baghdad, where he was executed in A.H. 290 (903). He was succeeded by his son, who held Sistan for only a year, after which the power of the short-lived dynasty came to an abrupt end; although Sistan for a few generations and Baluchistan for many centuries continued to be governed by scions of the Saffarid House.[2]

The Samanid Dynasty at its Zenith.—Upon the death of Nasr, Ismail succeeded and began a career of conquest which raised his principality to a kingdom. Curiously enough, his first campaign was a Holy War against the Christian settlement of Taraz, which resulted in its conquest and the conversion to Islam of its Amir and

[1] *Ten Thousand Miles, etc.*, p. 339.
[2] *Vide Ten Thousand Miles, etc.*, p. 229.

leading inhabitants. The defeat and capture of Amr in A.H. 288 (900), recorded in the preceding section, were the culminating success of his career, and were rewarded by a patent from the Caliph appointing him to the governorship of Khorasan, Turkestan, Transoxiana, Sind, Hind, and Jurgan. Though, as Vambéry points out in his *History of Bokhara*, the names of Hind and Sind were inserted merely by way of idle boast, Ismail's kingdom was a great one, and he was not content to rest on his laurels, but conducted successful campaigns against the Turks to the East.

Ismail chose Bokhara as his capital, and to him it mainly owes its title of *Sharif*, or Noble. Its fort dates back to the time of this great Samanid, who gathered round him a brilliant galaxy of historians, poets, and doctors of law, and brought in the golden age of the city on the Zarafshan.

Ismail was succeeded by Ahmad, who was murdered in A.H. 301 (913) after an inglorious reign. Nasr, his son, a boy of eight, then ascended the throne, and during a reign of thirty years extended the possessions of the dynasty by annexing Rei, Kum, and Isfahan, at the request of the Caliph, to whom the dynasty rendered homage and nominal obedience. Nasr II. was the Mamun of the Samanid dynasty, and we have the following account of the glories of his court from a contemporary, Abdul Malik of Nishapur, who writes: "Bokhara was, under the Samanid rule, the Focus of Splendour, the Shrine of Empire, the Meeting-place of the most unique intellects of the Age, the Horizon of the literary stars of the World, and the fair of the greatest scholars of the Period."[1]

Its Decay and Downfall.—Nasr was succeeded by Noh or Noah, under whom the dynasty decayed, its kings falling under the influence of Turkish slaves who were promoted to the highest posts. Noh was followed by Abdul Malik, the patron of Alptigin, who was killed at polo after a rule of seven years; his brother Mansur revived the prestige of the dynasty by exacting a tribute from the Daylami rulers of Irak and Fars. Noh II., who

[1] Quoted from Browne, *op. cit.* p. 365.

succeeded Mansur, suffered a series of vicissitudes, and is chiefly famous as having been cured by Abu Ali bin Sina, the great Avicenna. His nobles conspired against him and invited Boghra Khan,[1] who from his capital at Kashgar ruled over a confederacy of Turkish tribes, to invade the Samanid kingdom. Boghra Khan captured Bokhara but died shortly afterwards, and Noh, who had become a fugitive, returned. His nobles then fled to Khorasan, where they obtained help from the Daylami prince, and Noh in despair summoned to his aid Sabaktagin, who had founded the state of Ghazna at the expense of the Samanid dynasty. He readily sent a force which won a decisive victory near Herat, the battle being chiefly memorable as the first in which his son Mahmud, the future champion of Islam, fought, winning thereby as his reward from the grateful Noh the province of Khorasan: other victories were gained at Nishapur and at Tus.

Mansur II., the son and successor of Noh, was a poet of whose compositions fragments have been preserved. In reply to his companions who asked the distracted monarch why he never put off armour, he explained:

> They ask me why fine robes I do not wear,
> Nor covet stately tent with carpets rare.
> 'Midst clash of arms, what boots the minstrel's power?
> 'Midst rush of steeds, what place for rose-girt bower?
> Nor wine nor sweet-lipped Saki aught avail
> Where blood is splattered o'er the coats of mail.
> Arms, horse for me, banquet and bower enow,
> Tulip and lily mine the dart and bow.[2]

This martial sovereign did not live to see the extinction of his proud dynasty, but his successor, Abdul Malik, the last of his line, was seized by Ilak Khan, of the Turkish dynasty mentioned above, and thrown into prison, where he died. The capture of Abdul Malik took place in A.H. 389 (999), and this date marks the downfall of the Samanid dynasty, after a splendid though not unchequered career of exactly a century and a quarter.

[1] The dynasty is termed the Ilak Khans of Turkestan by Stanley Lane-Poole in his *Mohamedan Dynasties*, and the Kara-Khanides by Skrine and Ross in *The Heart of Asia*.

[2] Quoted from Browne, *op. cit.* p. 409.

The Ziyarid Dynasty, A.H. 316–434 (928–1042).—During the reign of Nasr II. the province of Tabaristan was recovered for the House of Ali by Hasan bin Ali-Utrush, but a few years later, in A.H. 316 (928), a certain Mardawij bin Ziyar contrived to seize it and to occupy Isfahan and the country beyond Hamadan as far as Holwan. He established a dynasty which was noted for its devotion to learning and which endured for rather over a century, although no member except its founder played a leading rôle on the stage of Persia. The best known of his successors was Kabus, A.H. 366–403 (976–1012), the patron of Al-biruni, who dedicated to him his famous *Chronology of Ancient Nations* and resided at his court for many years. Nor was he merely a patron of letters: he was himself a poet of no mean order, writing both in Arabic and in Persian.[1] In the latter language he composed an exquisite quatrain, translated as follows:

> Mirth's King the Rose is, Wine Joy's Herald eke;
> Hence from these two do I my pleasure seek;
> Would'st thou, O Moon, inquire the cause of this?
> Wine's taste thy lips recalls, the Rose thy cheek!

The career of Kabus was extremely chequered. He protected Fakhr-u-Dola, one of the Buwayhid princes, against his two brothers, the powerful Azud-u-Dola and the Muayyid-u-Dola, and in consequence was driven out of his princedom for many years. Upon his return, although he was famed for "his learning, piety, munificence, magnanimity, wisdom, prudence, and intelligence,"[2] his nobles, exasperated by his cruelty, deposed him and afterwards had him secretly murdered.

In 1908 I visited his tomb, which, as Ibn Isfandiyar states, is "outside Gurgan on the road to Khorasan." As the illustration shows, it is a lofty decagon with a curious conical roof, which is visible for miles across the level steppe. The Kufic inscription, which is in duplicate bands

[1] Browne, *op. cit.* p. 470.

[2] *Vide* Ibn Isfandiyar's *History of Tabaristan*, which is a mine of information about this period. In the *Kabus Nama* an amusing story is given to prove how well informed Kabus kept himself of what went on at the neighbouring courts. *Vide* Querry's translation, p. 413.

92



From a photograph by Major J. W. Watson.

THE GUNBAD-I-KABUS.

of brickwork, states that "this lofty grave was built by the orders of Shams-ul-Maali, the Amir, son of the Amir Kabus, son of Washmgir, during his lifetime, in A.H. 375 (997)."[1] It is one of the oldest buildings with a known date in North-Eastern Persia. Kabus's grandson, Kei Kaus, bin Iskandar, bin Kabus, was the author of the famous *Kabus Nama*, which gives rules of life in a delightful manner and is accessible to the European world through a French translation.

The Buwayhid or Daylamite Dynasty, A.H. 320–447 (932–1055).—The founder of the Ziyarid House quite unconsciously assisted to found another dynasty far more powerful than his own, by bestowing the governorship of Karaj, a district to the south of Hamadan, on Ali bin Buwayha, who, aided by his two capable brothers, soon extended his power southwards to the province of Fars, which he occupied. This family sprang from a Persian tribe in Daylam which claimed descent from Bahram Gur[2] and professed Shia doctrines. Ali seems to have been a favourite of fortune. After his conquest of Fars he was one day lying on a couch in the palace at Shiraz when he observed a snake dart out its head from a hole. Calling for masons to break down the wall, he found a secret chamber, in which was collected the entire treasure of Yakut, the dispossessed Governor, who had represented the Caliph. Shortly afterwards a tailor came to Ali for orders, and upon his sending for a stick with which to measure cloth, the man, mistaking his intention, threw himself at his feet and said that if his life were spared he would give up all Yakut's cloth, which he was at once allowed to do!

Ahmad, the most famous of Ali's brothers, embarked on a career of conquest; details of his exploits in the Kerman province can be gleaned from the local histories.[3] It appears that Kerman city was held by a

[1] "A Sixth Journey in Persia," *Journal R.G.S.* for January 1911.

[2] Al-biruni (Sachau's edition), pp. 45-46, does not allow the genuineness of this claim.

[3] I have made a précis of two histories of Kerman: (*a*) The history of Afzal-u-Din, known as Afzal Kermani. This was written in A.H. 584 (1188) for Malik Dinar, who was then ruler of Kerman. The manuscript was lithographed at Teheran in A.D. 1876. It deals mainly with the sixth century of the *Hijra* and contains some interesting information. (*b*) The history of Mohamed Ibrahim, who, from a remark

robber called Mohamed ibn Ilias but known as Abu Ali, and when Ahmad, having captured Sirjan, was besieging Kerman, Abu Ali adopted the unusual course of fighting by day and sending gifts by night, with the result that he was allowed to keep Kerman on the condition that he paid tribute. In an expedition to Jiruft the Buwayhid prince was ambushed in the Dilfard pass, and according to the chronicler escaped with only a few men and the loss of one of his hands. This, however, was merely a temporary reverse, and marching westwards he annexed Fars in conjunction with his brothers in A.H. 322 (934).

The Caliph was obliged to recognize the conquerors as his lieutenants. After organizing the captured provinces, Ahmad first moved westward and annexed Khuzistan, and ultimately in A.H. 334 (945) entered Baghdad, where the Caliph perforce welcomed him, bestowing on him the title of Muizz-u-Dola and the rank of *Amir-ul-Omara*, or "Amir of Amirs," which was held by the family for many generations.[1] The unfortunate Caliph was subsequently deposed, and his successors were puppets in the hands of the Buwayhid chiefs, who retained all power for about a century.

It is beyond the scope of this work to deal in detail with the three families of Fars, Irak, and Rei, into which the dynasty broke up; but I will attempt to give briefly some of the leading events of the period. Muizz-u-Dola died in A.H. 356 (967), and the next great member of the dynasty was Azud-u-Dola, who held the post of Vizier to the puppet Caliph and ruled Irak and Fars. His operations against his brother Fakhr-u-Dola have already been referred to in connexion with Kabus. He was an exceptionally enlightened prince, who encouraged pilgrims by restoring the sacred buildings at Medina, Najaf, and Kerbela. Moreover, he established hospitals for the poor of Baghdad, appointing physicians with regular

made by him, appears to have travelled to Sistan in A.H. 1025 (1636). The manuscript of this work was published by Houtsma in A.D. 1886. It deals with the Seljuks of Kerman and gives the chief events of the province from A.H. 433 (1041) to A.H. 619 (1222), *i.e.* up to the era of the Kutlugh Khans.

[1] Curiously enough, this high-sounding title is now used only in writing to nomad chiefs of secondary importance, such as the Ilkhani of Kuchan or the Chief of the Hazara tribe in Khorasan.

salaries, and purchasing drugs and other requisites. In Fars, too, his public works were numerous, and one of them, a dam on the river Kur, which is crossed a few miles south of Persepolis, is still termed Band-i-Amir, or the "Dam of the Amir," and is responsible for the lines of Moore:

> There's a bower of roses by Bendemeer's stream,
> And the nightingale sings round it all the day long.

The decay of the dynasty was rapid after the death of the Azud-u-Dola, and Mahmud of Ghazna prepared to attack Rei, which during the minority of the Majd-u-Dola was ruled by his mother. This intrepid woman returned the following reply to an envoy sent by Mahmud to demand her submission: "Had this message been sent in the lifetime of my deceased lord it would have caused serious trouble, but such is no longer the case. I know Sultan Mahmud and am aware that he will never undertake a campaign without weighing all the risks. If he attacks and conquers a weak woman, where is the glory of such an achievement? If he be repulsed, the latest ages will hear of his shame."

Whether or not Mahmud was swayed by these arguments, he postponed his designs until the Majd-u-Dola had attained his majority. Then, in A.H. 387 (997), he sent an army which seized the person of the prince by treachery and occupied Khorasan and Kumis. The family, however, retained Southern Persia and Irak for some time to come, until the Seljuks appeared on the scene and ended the rule of this Persian dynasty.

The Dynasty of Ghazna, A.H. 351–582 (962–1186).—Under Abdul Malik the Samanid there was a certain Alptigin, a Turkish slave, who became commander-in-chief in Khorasan. Upon the death of the monarch he retired to Ghazna in the Sulayman mountains, where his father had been governor, and there he, his son, and his slave Balkatigin in turn ruled in obscurity. The real founder of the famous dynasty was Sabaktagin, another slave, who succeeded to the governorship through his marriage with Alptigin's daughter. This truly remark-

able man extended his petty fief both eastwards and westwards, on the one hand defeating the Rajputs and seizing Peshawar, and on the other, as already recounted, receiving Khorasan in A.H. 384 (994) from the Samanid monarch Noh.

Sabaktagin was succeeded by Mahmud, one of the greatest figures on the stage of Central Asia, whose twelve campaigns in India and zeal for Islam have earned for him the title of "Idol-breaker." These campaigns lie outside the scope of this work, but his ultimate seizure of Khorasan, which has already been mentioned, belongs to Persian history. In Sistan the Conqueror found a certain Khalaf, a grandson of Amr-ul-Lais, who had held the province of Kerman for some time. Of him it is related that, in order to induce the Sistanis to support him in his designs on that province, he arranged for his envoys to be poisoned at Kerman and then raised an army to avenge the outrage!

According to Persian legend, Mahmud spared the life of Khalaf, who won his heart by addressing him as "Sultan," and who passed the rest of his existence as Master of Horse to the "Idol-breaker." Later on, in A.H. 398 (1007), Khorasan was invaded by Ilak Khan, the destroyer of the Samanid dynasty, who took advantage of the absence of Mahmud from Central Asia. But the great soldier speedily returned, and in a desperately contested battle near Balkh gained a decisive victory, driving the invaders into the Oxus; some years later he also annexed Bokhara and Samarcand. Mahmud's last campaign was directed against the Buwayhid dynasty, and after the capture of Isfahan he returned to Ghazna, where he died in A.H. 421 (1030).

It is interesting to note how anxious Mahmud was for recognition by the Caliph. He sent to Baghdad accounts of his victories, accompanied by splendid gifts, and in return was granted titles,[1] which gave him immense gratification. One of the stories of the East tells us how, in the first decree, Mahmud was termed *Mir*, which may mean either a chief or a slave, instead of *Amir.*

[1] In Browne's *op. cit.* vol. ii. p. 105 his titles are given in full.

A Persian courtier explained to his furious master that the omission of the *alif* or "A" conveyed a delicate request from the Caliph's Vizier for a thousand gold coins, the symbol for which is *alif*. The money was sent and a new decree was obtained, in which Mahmud was styled Amir. The prestige of the Caliph and the craving for recognition by him constituted practically all that was left of his power, but it was a force that had to be reckoned with and was doubtless of material assistance in maintaining the Caliphate. Soon after the death of Mahmud the western provinces of this extensive empire were annexed by the Seljuks, with the result that the dynasty looked eastwards for compensation and became thenceforth so much identified with India that Lahore was selected as the capital of the later Ghaznavid princes.



Toghril Beg.

CHAPTER LII

THE COMING OF THE SELJUK TURKS

While Apulia and Sicily were subdued by the Norman lance, a swarm of northern shepherds overspread the kingdoms of Persia; their princes of the race of Seljuk erected a splendid and solid empire from Samarcand to the confines of Greece and Egypt.—Gibbon.

The Importance of the Seljuks.—The previous chapter is little more than a medley, dealing as it does with numerous short-lived dynasties which seized upon various provinces of the decrepit Caliphate and then tumbled to pieces mainly from internal dissensions. The advent of a new power, the Seljuk Turks, constitutes a notable epoch in the history of the Middle and Near East, if only because it swept away these insignificant and divided dynasties and once again united Islam under a single powerful sway, stretching from Turkestan to the Mediterranean Sea. More than this, the Seljuks, with the fervour of recent converts, revitalized Islam, just as the Norsemen revitalized Christendom, and when Europe under Norman leaders attacked the East under the impulse of the Crusades it was the light horse of the Seljuks which met the heavy horse of the Crusaders.[1]

Their Origin.—The Seljuks were a branch of the Ghuzz Turks, from whom, however, they kept distinct. Their founder was Tukák (signifying a bow), the father

[1] The authorities for this chapter include Browne, vol. ii., and Skrine and Ross's *Heart of Asia*; the native chronicles referred to in the previous chapter are again used, more especially in connexion with the Seljuks of Kerman. I have also consulted a synopsis by Browne of *The Notification of Kings*, by Najm-u-Din, composed in A.H. 599 (1202), *vide* art. xxvii. of *Journal R.A.S.* for 1902.

of Seljuk, who with his tribe crossed from Turkestan into Transoxiana and embraced Islam with deep fervour. He and his descendants took part in the wars of the period, and speedily came into collision with Mahmud. The story runs that the great Conqueror asked Israil, the son of Seljuk, how many men followed him to battle, to which the nomad chief replied that if he despatched an arrow to his tents one hundred thousand men would prepare for war, but that if his bow were seen two hundred thousand men would join the former force. Sultan Mahmud, alarmed at this new power, imprisoned Israil, and, hoping probably to weaken the tribe by moving it away from its habitat, settled it in the district of Nisa,[1] and in Abivard, near the modern Kakha on the Central Asian Railway. The newcomers, under their chief, Mikail, proved unruly, and in the year before the death of Mahmud they attempted to invade Khorasan, but were driven back.

Masud of Ghazna.—Masud, the son of Mahmud, was from the outset unfortunate. After he had deposed his brother, not only was Khorasan attacked by the ferocious Ghuzz, who were destined to play a sinister part in Iran, but a rebellion broke out at the same time in India. To add to his misfortunes, Khorasan also rebelled, owing to being unprotected from the Ghuzz; and the Ziyarid prince of Gurgan and Tabaristan and the Governor of Khwarazm both seized the opportunity to throw off their allegiance. But Masud was no weakling, and in A.H. 426 (1035) he brought a large army from India, drove the Ghuzz from Tus and Nishapur, and invaded Tabaristan, which submitted. He then left Khorasan and busied himself with his possessions in India, to which he attached greater importance, probably because they yielded a larger revenue.

The Founding of the Seljuk Dynasty, A.H. 429 (1037).—To return to the Seljuks, Mikail, the brother of Israil, had two sons famous as Toghril (or "Falcon") and Chakir, to whom Masud had recourse in the operations against the Ghuzz and who aided him in driving these

[1] The site of Nisa is ten miles to the south-west of Askabad.

invaders out of Khorasan. But they were faithless allies, and the very next year, after the departure of Masud, Chakir Beg attacked and defeated the Ghaznavid general near Merv. In the following year Chakir captured Merv, and in A.H. 429 (1037) Toghril seized Nishapur. Khorasan thus passed into his hands, and Lane-Poole appropriately dates the foundation of the Seljuk dynasty from this important event. Masud, who had been unable to concentrate his attention upon the invaders because of disturbances in India, returned to fight for Khorasan, and in A.H. 431 (1040) suffered a crushing defeat. He retired to recruit fresh troops in India, where his army mutinied, with the result that he was deposed and afterwards murdered. Three years later Modud, son of Masud, was defeated, and after this campaign the Seljuk power was established in Khorasan, and the Ghaznavid dynasty turned its entire attention to its Indian possessions.

The Career of Toghril Beg, A.H. 429–455 (1037–1063). —I have already mentioned Mahmud's craving for recognition by the Caliph and for a grant of titles. Upon the defeat of the son of Masud similar recognition was sought by the Seljuk victors, in a letter wherein they assured the Caliph of their loyalty. Needless to say, their request was granted, Kaim causing Toghril's name to be read in the mosques and placed on the coins before that of the chief of the waning Buwayhid dynasty.

The conquering Seljuks had now spread all over Persia, which was divided up among various branches of the ruling family, and in A.H. 447 (1055) Toghril Beg crowned his victories by making a state visit to Baghdad. An account of the ceremony observed on this historical occasion has been handed down, and is of particular interest as showing the prestige which still attached to the Caliphate. The Seljuk conqueror, escorted by his nobles, approached the sacred presence on foot and unarmed. He was received by the Successor of the Prophet, who, seated on a golden throne concealed by hangings, wore the famous black mantle of the Abbasids and grasped the staff of Mohamed in his right hand. Toghril in awe and reverence fell on his face and kissed



From a photograph by the Author.

KURDS MIGRATING INTO DARRAGAZ, THE MEDIEVAL ABIVARD.

(Taken on the northern slope of the Allah ho Akbar range.)

100

the ground, and after a pause was conducted to a throne placed near that of the Caliph. A decree was then read, appointing him the Viceregent of the Successor of the Prophet and Lord of all Moslems. Seven robes of honour and seven slaves were then bestowed upon the Seljuk to symbolize the seven regions of the Caliphate; a rich brocade scented with musk was draped over his head, surmounted by twin crowns to signify the kingship of Arabia and Persia; and, to complete the investiture—the word here bears its literal meaning—he was girded with two swords to signify that he was ruler of the East and of the West. Some may think that the Caliph was merely masking his impotence by a ceremony that was little more than mummery; but it is more reasonable to suppose that the Seljuk chieftain did not so regard it, but felt after the investiture that his conquests had been legally recognized and that his crown had been hallowed by the religious head of Islam.

After remaining in Baghdad for about a year, during which his niece, sister of Alp Arslan, was married to the Caliph, Toghril continued his victorious career until in Georgia and Iberia his hordes came into collision with the armies of Byzantium. To quote Gibbon, "the shepherd presumed to despatch an ambassador, or herald, to demand the tribute and obedience of the Emperor of Constantinople." Upon his return to Baghdad the ever-victorious Seljuk was rewarded with the high-sounding title of "King of the East and of the West." He demanded a sister of the Caliph in marriage, and this supreme honour was reluctantly granted; but he died before the ceremony could be completed.

Thus passed off the stage, at the age of seventy, Rukn-u-Din, Abu Talib, Toghril Beg, the leader of a wave of virile Turks from the East, who, although Moslems themselves, overwhelmed the kingdoms owning allegiance to the Caliphate. A notable personality, he raised his tribe from mere tenders of sheep and robbers to become the possessors of a wide empire. Little is known of the character of this extraordinary man, save that he was harsh when necessary, strict in his religious observ-

ances, and secretive, but more generous in disposition than his upbringing and circumstances would lead us to expect.

Malik Kaward of Kerman, A.H. 433–465 (1041–1072).—Although it was the career of Toghril Beg that governed the fortunes of the Seljuk dynasty, we may turn aside for a moment to notice the Kerman dynasty, which lasted from A.H. 433 (1041) to A.H. 583 (1187), albeit its importance was mainly confined to the lifetime of its founder Imad-u-Din, Kara Arslan Kaward, the eldest son of Chakir Beg. This scion of the House of Seljuk was vigorous and capable, and found little difficulty in seizing the province from the Buwayhid rulers, who were weakened by family feuds. The chronicler Mohamed Ibrahim relates that when Abu Kalinjar, the Imad-u-Din, marched from Fars to defend the province he was poisoned by a favourite slave girl, but further efforts apparently were made after his death. The Seljuk now had to deal with the "Hot Country," which at this period was independent. Here again treachery was employed, and Malik Kaward, as he is generally termed, not only annexed the country down to the coast but compelled the Governor of Hormuz to fit out a fleet, in which he crossed to Oman. As the result of his expedition this province of Arabia remained for many years tributary to Kerman.

Later in his reign Malik Kaward turned his attention to Sistan, building a fort to close the pass on the only route which united the two provinces, and erecting pillars to serve as beacons in the desert. One of these two columns, which is still intact, is now termed "the Column of Nadir"; it was owing to the chronicle of Mohamed Ibrahim that I was able to assign it to the first Seljuk ruler of Kerman.[1]

The ambitions of Malik Kaward were boundless, and he soon added Fars to his kingdom; but he was obliged to surrender this to Alp Arslan, who besieged Kerman. Finally, upon the accession of Malik Shah, he made a bid for the throne, and paid the penalty with his life.

Alp Arslan, A.H. 455–465 (1063–1072).—During his

[1] *Ten Thousand Miles, etc.*, p. 418.

lifetime Toghril chose Azud-u-Din, Abu Shuja Alp Arslan, son of Chakir Beg and younger brother of Malik Kaward, as his successor. After Toghril's death, Al-Kunduri,[1] his minister, unwisely supported Sulayman, brother of his late master, but in vain, and he himself was put to death. His dying message to Alp Arslan ran: "Say to the King, 'Lo, a fortunate service has your service been to me; for thy uncle gave me this world to rule over, whilst thou, giving me the martyr's portion, hast granted me the other world; so, by your service, have I gained this world and that!'" The "Conquering Lion"—to translate his title—mighty ruler though he was, is chiefly remembered in connexion with Abu Ali Hasan bin Ishak, famous in history as the Nizam-ul-Mulk. This great statesman was born at Radkan, some fifty miles to the north of Meshed, and after enjoying a good education attracted the favourable notice of Chakir Beg. Having been recommended to Alp Arslan, he became his Vizier. He is always looked upon as the model of a great minister, and some, at least, of his work has endured; for the Persian system of accounts which prevails to-day is believed to have been originated by him. Among his protégés was Omar Khayyam, the Persian poet best known to Europeans; and the famous college which he founded at Baghdad became a school of great men, among whom al-Ghazáli, the eminent theologian, deserves special mention.

Under Alp Arslan the boundaries of the Seljuk Empire were extended. Eastward he subdued Herat, and later on Jand in Transoxiana; he also successfully checked the ambitions of his brother Kaward, as already related. In Arabia he overcame the Fatimids and gained Mecca and Medina, thereby much augmenting his prestige. In A.H. 464 (1071) he defeated a vastly superior Byzantine army in western Asia Minor and took prisoner the Emperor Diogenes Romanus. The story is told that when Romanus, who had fought heroically, was brought to Alp Arslan he was asked what treatment he expected. He replied either death or to be paraded

[1] So called from Kundur in the Turshiz district.

throughout the Empire, as it was unlikely that he would be spared. Asked how he would have behaved had he won, he answered, "I would have beaten thee with many a stripe." Alp Arslan showed remarkable magnanimity; for Romanus, after making a treaty and stipulating to pay a ransom, was set free. His subjects, however, refused to recognize him. In this campaign mention is made of a body of mercenary French and Normans, commanded by Ursel of Baliol, a kinsman—possibly an ancestor—of the Scottish kings.

The last campaign of this warlike Seljuk was against Khwarazm and the Turks, and while the army was crossing the Oxus a certain prisoner was brought in who had held a fort in Khwarazm with much bravery. Condemned to be pegged out on the ground until he died, the fearless soldier cursed Alp Arslan for inflicting a death so degrading; whereupon the monarch, waving his attendants aside, shot an arrow at him, but missed, and before the prisoner could be seized he mortally wounded the great Seljuk. So perished Alp Arslan in the zenith of his fame and manhood. He was buried at Merv with the following epitaph:

> Thou hast seen Alp Arslan's head in pride exalted to the sky;
> Come to Merv, and see how lowly in the dust that head doth lie!

Alp Arslan was tall, a noted archer, and had such long moustaches that they had to be tied up when he shot. His life was spent in fighting, and he gained the reputation of being fearless, generous, and religious. It is much to his credit that he realized the genius for administration of the Nizam-ul-Mulk, and gave him his entire confidence and a free hand. The result was that justice and order prevailed, learning was encouraged, and such prosperity returned to Persia that the Seljuk dynasty at its prime need not fear comparison with any of its predecessors.

The Seljuk Empire at its Zenith under Malik Shah, A.H. 465–485 (1072–1092).—Jalal-u-Din, Abul Fath, Malik Shah had been proclaimed heir-apparent at Meshed before his father proceeded on his last expedition. He was only seventeen when he was suddenly called to assume the

vast responsibilities of Empire, and his accession was by no means unchallenged. His uncle, Kaward, marched to Rei, and at Karaj, to the south of Hamadan, a desperate battle was fought which lasted for three days and three nights before the pretender was defeated. Meanwhile Altigin, the Khan of Samarcand, had invaded the Empire, and in another quarter Ibrahim of Ghazna captured his uncle, Othman; but Ibrahim was pursued and routed by the Amir Gumushtigin, whose servant, Anushtigin, was destined to found the dynasty of the Khwarazm Shahs or Kings of Khiva. Supported by the Nizam-ul-Mulk, Malik Shah weathered all these storms of state, together with the rebellion of a brother, and five years after his accession he was in a position to extend still farther the bounds of the Empire. His generals subdued the greater part of Syria and Egypt in the west, while in the east they not only conquered Bokhara and Samarcand, but received tribute from the Prince of Kashgar, who was obliged to recognize Seljuk suzerainty on his coins.

The internal prosperity of the Empire increased under the wise guidance of the Nizam-ul-Mulk. Among the stories related of the famous Vizier is one that illustrates both the extent of the Empire and his own efficiency. The Nizam-ul-Mulk, it is said, paid the boatmen on the Oxus by bills on Antioch, and the efficiency of his financial policy was proved by the fact that they were readily cashed. Science was fostered by the monarch, who, himself a man of culture, founded the observatory at Nishapur in which Omar Khayyam laboured with other scientists to compute the new era which Malik Shah inaugurated, and which was termed Jalali in his honour.

Moreover, the dynasty maintained its virility. The Sultan was passionately fond of polo, so much so that he played a match at Baghdad the day after his arrival at the capital; he was equally fond of shooting and kept a record of his bags of game. Malik Shah was seldom at rest, but among the cities in the Empire his favourite residence was Isfahan, which afterwards became the capital of Persia under the Safavi dynasty. There he constructed fine buildings and laid out sumptuous gardens.

The Downfall of the Nizam-ul-Mulk.—The power and influence of the Great Vizier seemed to remain unimpaired, and when an old man he wrote his celebrated *Siásat Náma*, or "Treatise on the Art of Government," which won high praise from his royal master. But nevertheless he fell, and Malik Shah, who resembled Haroun-al-Rashid in his good fortune, has also come down to us with a tarnished name for his dismissal of the Great Vizier, even although there was no such tragedy as accompanied the downfall of the Barmecides.

It appears that complaint was made against a grandson of the Nizam-ul-Mulk, and the aged Vizier, who had doubtless grown overbearing with years, returned an angry reply to his master's reproaches. The incident might have passed unnoticed but for the fact that Turkan Khatun,[1] the favourite wife of Malik Shah, was hostile to the Vizier, and consequently he was dismissed. He was not put to death or imprisoned, but shortly after his downfall was assassinated by a *fidai*, or devotee, who was believed to have been sent by the famous Hasan Sabbah. There is an old legend to the effect that the Nizam-ul-Mulk was at school at Nishapur with Omar Khayyam and Hasan Sabbah, and the three boys swore eternal friendship, agreeing that whichever of them succeeded in life should help the other two. The Nizam-ul-Mulk fulfilled his obligation in the case of Omar Khayyam, who refused the governorship of Nishapur but asked for a pension, which was granted. He also found a suitable post for Hasan Sabbah, but the latter intrigued to supplant his benefactor, and on the failure of his designs became the Nizam-ul-Mulk's enemy. This legend is too well known to be passed by, but disparities of age make its truth impossible.

As in the case of the Barmecides, profound sympathy was felt for the fallen minister, and it was deepened by his tragic end. The exquisite lines of which the following is a translation are among the elegies in which his fate is commemorated :

[1] *I.e.* "The Turkish lady," a title, not a name.

The Minister Nizam-ul-Mulk was a peerless pearl, which the All-merciful God esteemed as of great price,
But, precious as it was, the age knew not its value, so, in jealousy, He replaced it in its shell.

The Death of Malik Shah, A.H. 485 (1092).—Malik Shah survived his faithful servant less than a month, dying at the height of his fame, after a short illness, before he was forty years of age. With him passed what may justly be termed the golden prime of the Seljuk dynasty; for never within historical times had a vast empire been better governed than during the thirty years now concluded.

The Assassins.—In the previous chapter some account has been given of the origin of the Ismailis and also of their immediate offshoots. The members of the sect, under the European name of Assassins, played a large part on the stage of the Near East and Iran during this period and the two succeeding centuries, and they became famous in Europe through the baleful activity of their Syrian branch. It is therefore desirable to give some account of their tenets and operations at this period. The political importance of the sect began with the foundation of the so-called Fatimid dynasty, which claimed descent from the Prophet's daughter, and the Ismailis are in consequence often referred to as Fatimi or Alawi (descendants of Ali). By their opponents they are termed Ismaili, *Batini* ("Esoterics"), *Mulahida* ("heretics"), this last word being the Mulehet of Marco Polo.

The dynasty in question was brought into existence through a propaganda started in A.H. 260 (873) by a certain Abdulla bin Maymun al-Kaddah, an oculist of Ahwaz and a Persian by birth. This extraordinary man founded a secret society which was to bind together Arabs and Persians, Christians and Jews, and indeed all mankind, into a school which was to owe implicit obedience to himself and to serve as a powerful instrument of his ambitions. As in the case of the Abbasid propaganda, *dai* or missionaries spread the peculiar doctrines, which offered all things to all men—a Mahdi to the Moslems, a Messiah to the Jews, philosophy to the wise, and liberty to the foolish.

There was an inner doctrine for the fully initiated, which, as Browne puts it, was "philosophical and eclectic, borrowing much from old Iranian and Semitic systems and something from Neo-Platonist and Neo-Pythagorean ideas. It was dominated throughout by the mystic number *Seven*; there were Seven Prophetic Periods . . . and each of these Seven great Prophets was succeeded by seven Imams."[1]

The task of the *dai* was to arouse curiosity by asking questions such as: "Why did God create the Universe in Seven Days?" "Why are there Seven Heavens, Seven Earths (or Climes), Seven Seas, and Seven Verses in the Opening Chapter of the Koran?" Among the more subtle questions were the following: "What, in reality, are the torments of hell? How can it be true that the skins of the damned will be changed into a fresh skin, in order that this fresh skin, which has not participated in their sins, may be submitted to the tortures of hell?" After a convert had been won, he was induced to take an oath of allegiance to the *dai* as representing the Imam, and to pay the Imam's money.

The Fatimid Dynasty, A.H. 297–567 (909–1171).—The founder of the Fatimid dynasty was the grandson of the oculist. Taking the name of Abu Mohamed Obaydulla, he conquered the larger portion of northern Africa and made Mahdiya, near modern Tunis, his capital. Sixty years later Egypt was added to the kingdom, and by the end of the tenth century A.D. the greater part of Syria, including Jerusalem, was in the hands of the Fatimid line, which bore sway until the famous Salah-u-Din, the Saladin of the Crusaders, overthrew their kingdom in A.H. 567 (1171).

The most notorious personage of the dynasty thus founded was Hakim Biamrillah, or "He who rules by the order of God," who claimed divine honours and, possibly in imitation of the twelfth Imam, "disappeared" from the earth—or else was assassinated. It is of interest to note that his adherents, the Druzes, who derive their name from al-Duruzi, Hakim's Vizier, survive to the

[1] *Op. cit.* vol. ii. p. 197.

present day as a picturesque sect in the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon.

The Career of Hasan Sabbah.—Hasan Sabbah, whom we have met as an enemy of the Nizam-ul-Mulk in the reign of Malik Shah, was the son of a native of Kufa and was born at Kum. Like his father, he belonged to the "Sect of the Twelve" until he fell under the influence of the famous Nasir-i-Khusru, the "Proof" of Khorasan (who is referred to in Chapter LIV.), and other Fatimid *dais*. He was advised to proceed to Egypt, where he was received with honour; returning thence to Persia, he extended the Fatimid propaganda to Yezd, Kerman, and Tabaristan, but he avoided the city of Rei, whose governor, a son-in-law of the Nizam-ul-Mulk, was under orders to seize him.

His next step was to capture by an artifice the mountain fortress of Alamut in the Elburz range, close to the road which runs from Kazvin to Resht. This was accomplished in A.H. 483 (1090), and was followed by similar successes in other parts of Persia, more especially in the province of Kuhistan, where Tabas, Tun, Kain, Zuzan, Khur, and Khusf became centres of Ismaili power.

"*The Old Man of the Mountain.*"—Hasan Sabbah, having established his position, broke off from the Ismailis of Egypt on the death of the Fatimite Caliph Mustansir in A.H. 487 (1094) by espousing the cause of Nizar, the unsuccessful claimant, whose brother, Mustali, succeeded to the throne of Cairo.

Hasan Sabbah now reorganized the order, at the head of which he placed himself as the Grand Master, commonly termed the Shaykh-ul-Jabal, or "Chief of the Mountain." Inasmuch as "Shaykh" is frequently used as a term of respect to grey-beards, this title passed into Europe in the form "le Vieux" or "The Old Man of the Mountain." Next in the hierarchy came the Grand Priors of districts or sees, with their staff of *dai*. Below these superior grades were the "Companions," the "Adherents," and lastly the famous *Fidais* or "Devotees," whose fanatical disregard of life made the sect feared even by the most puissant monarchs. The Crusaders

were brought into contact with the Syrian branch of the order, and Raymond, Count of Tripoli, in A.D. 1149, and Conrad of Montferrat, titular King of Jerusalem in A.D. 1192, were among its more famous European victims. In A.D. 1272 the life of Prince Edward, afterwards Edward I. of England, was attempted at Acre, but according to tradition saved by his consort, who sucked the wound.

The Initiation of the Devotees.—A graphic account of the initiation of the *fidais* is given by Marco Polo, who, writing shortly after the capture of Alamut by Hulagu in A.D. 1252, says:[1] "The Old Man had caused a certain valley between two mountains to be enclosed, and had turned it into a garden, the largest and most beautiful that ever was seen, filled with every variety of fruit. And there were runnels flowing with wine and milk and honey and water; and numbers of ladies and of the most beautiful damsels in the world. For the Old Man desired to make his people believe that this was actually Paradise.

"Now no man was allowed to enter the Garden save those whom he intended to be his ASHISHIN. . . . Then he would introduce them into his garden, some four or six or ten at a time, having first made them drink a certain potion which cast them into a deep sleep, and then causing them to be lifted and carried in. When therefore they awoke and found themselves in a place so charming, they deemed that it was Paradise in very truth. . . . So when the Old Man would have any prince slain, he would say to a youth: 'Go thou and slay so and so; and when thou returnest my Angels shall bear thee into Paradise.'"

The potion was composed of *cannabis indica*, or hemp, known as hashish, and this is undoubtedly the origin of the word "Assassin." The *fidais* rarely survived their victims, as they gloried in martyrdom and attempted to execute their mission in the most open and dramatic manner. Indeed, so certain of happiness after death were the followers of this sect that mothers wept if their sons

[1] Yule's *Marco Polo*, i. p. 139 (Cordier's edition).

returned alive from a quest on which they had been sent by the "Shaykh of the Mountain."

Mahmud, A.H. 485 (1092); *Barkiyaruk*, A.H. 487 (1094); *Malik Shah II.*, A.H. 498 (1104); *Mohamed*, A.H. 498–511 (1104–1117).—The death of Malik Shah unchained fierce rivalries. He had four sons, all of whom ultimately reigned, the latest and most illustrious being Sultan Sanjar, or "the Hawk."

Turkan Khatun was at Baghdad with Mahmud, a child of four, at the time of her husband's decease, and immediately brought influence to bear upon the Caliph Muktadi to secure her son's accession. In this she succeeded, and a high official was sent on posthorses to Isfahan with orders to seize Barkiyaruk, Malik Shah's eldest son by another wife, Zobayda. But this attempt was forestalled by the sons of the Nizam-ul-Mulk, and Barkiyaruk, a boy of twelve, was taken off to Rei, where he was crowned. Turkan Khatun had followed her emissary and gained possession of Isfahan, where she was soon attacked by the supporters of Barkiyaruk, who, however, were bought off. Shortly afterwards Turkan Khatun, by promise of marriage, induced Malik Ismail, brother of Zobayda, to attack the rival of her son; but he was defeated, and Barkiyaruk was formally proclaimed at Baghdad two years after the death of Malik Shah. But this did not end the troubles; for Tutush, a paternal uncle and the founder of the Syrian dynasty, rose in rebellion and captured the young Sultan, whom he brought to Isfahan and threw into prison. It had been decided to blind him, but his half-brother Mahmud suddenly died of smallpox, and Barkiyaruk was thereupon restored to the throne, owing partly, no doubt, to the disappearance from the scene of Turkan Khatun, who had been put to death a short time before.

Barkiyaruk, who appears to have profited by his lessons in the school of adversity, defeated and killed Tutush in the following year, and another rebellious uncle was opportunely removed by the hand of a page. In the course of these stirring events the life of Barkiyaruk also was attempted by one of the Ismaili devotees, but he escaped.

In A.H. 489 (1096) Sanjar was appointed King of Khorasan, but in A.H. 492 (1099) the year of the capture of Jerusalem by the Crusaders, Mohamed, another son of Malik Shah, rebelled, aided by the Muayyid-ul-Mulk, the ablest of the late Nizam-ul-Mulk's sons, whom Barkiyaruk had dismissed from office and converted into a mortal enemy. Small wonder was it that the invasion from Europe met with no response from Baghdad, for civil war was waged incessantly throughout the reign of the unfortunate Barkiyaruk. At last peace was made, but shortly afterwards Barkiyaruk died, and his brother Mohamed obtained the supreme power by seizing and blinding the heir-apparent, Malik Shah II., a boy of five. Mohamed now became the undisputed ruler of the heart of the Empire, and during his reign he waged incessant war on the Assassins. Upon his death his successor, Mahmud, a foolish boy of fourteen, attacked his powerful uncle, Sanjar, who defeated him at Sava, to the west of Kum. With magnanimity unusual in that period, Sanjar not only spared the boy's eyes, but made him ruler of Irak and gave him his own daughter in marriage.

During this period of fratricidal strife the Empire had broken up, Kerman, Syria, and Asia Minor all coming under independent dynasties, although to some extent they acknowledged the nominal suzerainty of the main line. Sanjar, however, had practically no concern with the provinces west of Iran, and the Seljuks of Rum, as Asia Minor was termed, were entirely independent and maintained their dynasty until the rise of the Osmanlis at the beginning of the fourteenth century.

The Seljuks of Kerman, A.H. 433–583 (1041–1187).—The Seljuks of Kerman have been mentioned and the career of their founder, Malik Kaward, has been related; but we must follow briefly the later fortunes of the dynasty, which ruled in south-east Persia for one hundred and forty-six years.

After the execution of Malik Kaward his victorious nephew, Malik Shah, decided to extirpate the whole of his family, and with that end in view marched on Kerman and laid siege to it. But Kaward had left forty daughters,

and when representations were made that it was not becoming for these to be handed over to the soldiery Malik Shah pardoned the family. Kerman was left to Sultan Shah, son of Kaward, who had been partially blinded after the defeat of his father, but had escaped and returned thither. Turan Shah, the founder of the Masjid-i-Malik mosque of Kerman, was the next ruler, and his son, Iran Shah, was such a "monster" that he was put to death. In other words, he was suspected of favouring the Ismaili tenets. Under the just and efficient rule of his cousin, Arslan Shah, who reigned forty-one years, from A.H. 494 to A.H. 536 (1100–1141), the province attained great prosperity. If the chronicler is to be credited, caravans from Asia Minor, Khorasan, and Irak passed through it bound for Abyssinia, Zanzibar, and China. Arslan Shah was sovereign also of the neighbouring province of Fars, and had his deputy in Oman. Ultimately the dynasty was destroyed by the Ghuzz, like the main branch of the Seljuks.

The Origin of the Crusades.—By way of conclusion to this chapter I propose to give a brief account of the Crusades,[1] which for nearly two centuries constituted an attack by Christendom on Islam as represented by the Seljuk and Fatimid Empires; although they affected the fortunes of Persia only indirectly, to pass them by without notice would leave this narrative incomplete. Pilgrimages to Jerusalem may be said to date from the famous journey of St. Helena, the mother of Constantine, whose alleged discovery of the true cross in A.D. 326 marked the beginning of pilgrim-travel; and Beazley gives details of St. Silvia, of Jerome, and other very early pilgrims.

Of special interest to us is the journey of St. Willibald, the West Saxon, the earliest recorded Englishman who visited the East. He and his companions started from Hamble Mouth, near Southampton, with the original intention of proceeding no farther than Rome, where they stayed for some time. In the spring of A.D. 722, having decided "to reach and gaze upon the walls of that delect-

[1] For this section I have consulted *The Crusades in the East*, by W. B. Stevenson, and Beazley's *Dawn of Modern Geography*.

able and desirable city of Jerusalem," they travelled *via* Naples to Syracuse and Southern Greece, and so to Ephesus, whence they proceeded, mainly by land, to Cyprus. Their port in Syria was Tortosa, and, walking inland to Emesa, they were thrown into prison "as strangers and unknown men." A friendly Spaniard, brother of a chamberlain to the Caliph, took up their case, and they were summoned to appear before Yezid II. On his asking whence they came, they replied, "From the western shore, where the sun sets, and we know not of any land beyond—nothing but water." So remote were the British Isles before the discovery of America! The Caliph upon hearing this exclaimed, "Why punish them? They have done no wrong; set them free." By this journey Willibald, almost forgotten to-day, was the forerunner of a mighty movement of conquest.

It will be remembered that in the account of the reign of Haroun-al-Rashid a reference was made to his exchange of embassies with Charlemagne. Indeed, no fewer than three missions visited the great Caliph, who despatched three return embassies to Europe.[1] Again, during the reign of Mamun, Louis the Pious, son of Charlemagne, sent an embassy, which brought a response from Mamun six years later. The concessions obtained from Haroun gave the Franks a strong position in Jerusalem, but before the ninth century closed their quasi-protectorate, as Beazley aptly terms it, passed to the Byzantines.

It is hard to realize how deep was the interest taken by Christendom in pilgrimages during the tenth century, and from what remote countries the pilgrims came. It is especially remarkable that in A.D. 987 two Icelanders appear on the scene, first-fruits of the conversion of the Norsemen with all its far-reaching consequences. In the eleventh century pilgrimages became common, even women taking part in them, and the interest of Christendom grew continually deeper. Suddenly, in A.D. 1010, the mad Fatimite Hakim Biamrillah, who has already been mentioned, destroyed the buildings of the Holy Sepulchre.

[1] *Dawn of Geography*, vol. ii. p. 120.

Some ten years later they were rebuilt, but Christendom had meanwhile been stirred to its depths, and from that time the crusades became inevitable, although eighty years were to elapse before the movement gained sufficient strength for action.

The First Crusade, A.D. 1095–1099.—Perhaps the first reply to the destruction of the Holy Sepulchre was given in the island of Sardinia, which was wrested by the Pisans from Islam in 1016. In 1060 the Norman conquest of Sicily from the Arabs, which took thirty years to accomplish, began, and this may to some extent be regarded as a crusade. In A.D. 1095 Pope Urban II. delivered a memorable address at Clermont, telling his hearers how the cries from threatened Constantinople and oppressed Jerusalem were ringing in his ears, and that it would take two months to traverse the lands which the "accursed Persian race"[1] had won from the Empire of the East. The effect was instantaneous on minds already prepared, and cries of *Deus le volt*, *Deus le volt*, "God wills it, God wills it," went up from the mighty host, which was now moved against Islam as it had never been moved before. Crosses were distributed and Christendom, stirred by wandering preachers such as Peter the Hermit who carried the theme of Urban's sermon far and wide, prepared for the Crusades.

The Defeat of the First Army by the Seljuks.—As might be expected, the first raw levies which marched across Europe, massacring the Jews and generally robbing and pillaging, reached Constantinople in very small numbers. The Emperor Alexius advised them to await the arrival of the organized armies; in the meanwhile, dreading their lawlessness, he transported them to Asia and sent them supplies by sea. The German section of these Crusaders made a raid towards Nicaea on the Sea of Marmora, but they were surrounded and captured by Kilij-Arslan Daud, the reigning Seljuk of Rum; the same Prince also surprised and cut to pieces the main body of the undisciplined mob, with the exception of a

[1] The appeal of the Byzantine Emperor for armed help was actually due to conquests by the Seljuk Turks, here erroneously termed Persians. It was intended to use the western troops to recover Asia Minor for Byzantium.

remnant which escaped into a fort and was rescued by troops from Constantinople.

The Capture of Nicaea and of Antioch by the Crusaders.—The next effort was much better organized, men of higher rank and position, such as Raymond of Toulouse and Duke Robert of Normandy, taking part in it. The army avoided the Mediterranean Sea which was in Moslem hands, and marching by various routes united outside the walls of Constantinople. Crossing into Asia Minor, the vanguard attacked Nicaea, and was in turn assaulted by Kilij-Arslan, who probably expected another encounter with a mob. But these Crusaders were a very different force, and in this, their first battle, they won a complete victory. Nicaea surrendered in the end to Alexius, and the crusading army marched across the heart of Asia Minor towards Syria. But it was no military promenade; for at Dorylaeum, two or three stages to the south-east of Nicaea, they were again fiercely attacked, and with some difficulty beat off the enemy. Asia Minor had been devastated by the Turkish hordes, and the Crusaders suffered terribly from lack of water and supplies, but at last they descended into Syria, and in October A.D. 1097 besieged Antioch, which was captured after extraordinary vicissitudes of fortune.

The Storming of Jerusalem, A.H. 492 (1099).—It is of interest to note that the Crusaders had opened negotiations in advance with the Fatimid Caliph, who sent a return embassy to the camp at Antioch. Jerusalem was in his possession, and he apparently refused any concession except that he would admit three hundred unarmed pilgrims to worship at the Holy Sepulchre. This offer was rejected with scorn, and in A.H. 492 (1099) Jerusalem was stormed, when the deplorable fanaticism of Christendom was vented on the Moslem and Jewish inhabitants, who were slain in thousands. News of the capture of the city, which was sacred in Islam as the scene of the Prophet's heavenly flight and as containing the mosque of Omar, reached Baghdad, and after it came crowds of refugees who clamoured for war against the infidel. But, as we have already seen, the Seljuks were

at that time fighting to the death among themselves, and in spite of tumults at Baghdad, where the Great Mosque was stormed, no action was taken either by the Seljuks or by the Fatimids, and the Crusaders were allowed to organize their conquests in peace. Thus in a halo of glory ended the first crusade, which constituted a sign that Christendom was rallying and reviving. As Beazley says: "The crusades are the central expression of this revival, which, though defeated in some of its immediate objects, was entirely successful in kindling a spirit of patriotism, of practical religious fervour, and of boundless enterprise, whereby our Western World finally attained to the discovery, conquest, colonisation, or trade-dominion of the best portions of the earth."[1]

[1] *Op. cit.* vol. ii. p. 2.



Alp Arslan.

CHAPTER LIII

THE DISRUPTION OF THE SELJUK EMPIRE

They adore the wind and live in the desert: they eat no bread and drink no wine, but endure a diet of raw meat and, being destitute of noses, breathe only through two small holes.—Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela.

Sultan Sanjar at the Height of his Fame.—Sultan Sanjar is famous in history not only for his power and success, which gained him the reputation of being invincible, but also for his sudden and tragic fall, which involved that of his dynasty. According to native chroniclers, during the forty years of his rule as King of Khorasan, Sanjar made nineteen conquests. After he had attained the position of Great Seljuk by the defeat of his nephew, his successes continued, and in A.H. 524 (1130) he invaded Mavaranahr,[1] or Transoxiana, in order to reduce Ahmad Khan, who had ceased to pay tribute. He besieged Samarcand and took Ahmad Khan prisoner, but subsequently restored him to power. Six years later Bahram Shah, of the Ghaznavid dynasty, rebelled, but soon tendered his submission; in A.H. 535 (1140) Samarcand again revolted and for six months endured a siege by Sanjar, who when he captured it displayed unusual clemency towards its inhabitants. To the north his campaigns against the rising power of Khwarazm, or Khiva, during the earlier years of his reign kept that state in check.

Mohamed Ibrahim mentions in his history that Sanjar, who had designs on the Kerman province,

[1] Literally "Beyond the River."

remarked to the envoy of Arslan Shah that he had heard there was a district in Kerman where the narcissus bloomed. "True, O Sultan," was the reply, "but there are sharp thorns also." It is not recorded that Sanjar made any attack on the province, and the chronicler evidently believes the Great Seljuk took this remark as a warning that he would be opposed if he attempted an invasion. On the other hand he was accepted as suzerain by the Kerman branch of the dynasty.

An Episode of the Assassins.—In the previous chapter I have given some account of the rise of the baleful power of the assassins, and its continuance, in spite of the long list of their victims, is a proof of the unsatisfactory condition of the Seljuk Empire. Barkiyaruk, during whose reign they consolidated their position, was himself accused of being in sympathy with their tenets and, perhaps as a proof of his orthodoxy, ordered a massacre of the sect, one of many which were instituted by way of reprisal. As already mentioned, Iran Shah, the Seljuk prince of Kerman, was also suspected of adherence to the Ismaili doctrines. It is difficult to conceive a more diabolical state of affairs than one which caused all men of position and especially monarchs to go constantly in fear for their lives, and sowed the deepest mistrust between all classes. Nor did capture end the assassin's power for evil, as for instance after the assassination of the Fakhr-ul-Mulk, son of the Nizam-ul-Mulk; for the devotee, being interrogated by Sultan Sanjar, denounced several prominent officers of the Court, who, although probably innocent, were in consequence executed.

A terrible instance of their almost incredible methods was that of ibn Attash,[1] who won thousands of converts at Isfahan. Numbers of people were at that time disappearing in a most inexplicable manner and a panic prevailed. The mystery was solved through the instrumentality of a beggar-woman who, hearing groans proceeding from a house, suspected foul play and refused to enter when pressed to do so. She raised an alarm, and the crowd, breaking into the building, found four or five

[1] Browne's *Literary History*, vol. ii. p. 314.

hundred miserable victims, most of whom were crucified, and some still alive. These unhappy creatures had been lured to their doom by a blind man, who used to stand at the end of the lane leading to his house crying out, "May God pardon him who will take the hand of this poor blind man and lead him to the door of his dwelling in this lane!" The vengeance taken on the owner of the house and his accomplices was swift; and afterwards ibn Attash himself was paraded through Isfahan and crucified, arrows being shot at him to increase his sufferings. If ever an agonising punishment is justifiable, that of ibn Attash was well deserved. Yet, owing to the death of Sultan Mohamed in A.D. 1118, these accursed heretics were not extirpated, but on the contrary gained possession of fortresses in Syria and in every part of Persia.

It is related that Sanjar intended to attack Alamut, and had marched several stages towards it when one morning, on waking up, he found a dagger stuck into the ground near his bed. Attached to it was a paper with the following written menace: "Sultan Sanjar, beware! Had not thy character been respected, the hand which stuck this dagger into the hard ground could with greater ease have struck it into thy soft bosom." Apparently the threat had the desired result, for the Great Seljuk abandoned his undertaking.

The Ghorid Dynasty, A.H. 543–612 (1148–1215).—The Ghorid dynasty which held sway in the mountains between Herat and Ghazna calls for a short notice. Mahmud reduced the principality, and its princes continued to rule under the Ghaznavid monarchs, with whom they had intermarried. Bahram Shah, the reigning Ghaznavid, executed a member of the Ghorid family, whose death was avenged by the capture of Ghazna in A.H. 543 (1148) and the expulsion of Bahram Shah. This prince, however, recovered his capital by means of a conspiracy, and treated Sayf-u-Din, brother of the Prince, with extreme cruelty and insult, parading him through the city and then crucifying him. Six years later Ala-u-Din, the reigning Ghorid Prince, exacted the fullest retribution,

and gained the awful title of *Jahan Suz*, or "World Burner," by the ferocity with which he reduced to a heap of ashes the beautiful buildings erected by Mahmud and his successors. Yet, as we read in the *Chahar Makala*, "he bought with gold the poems written in their praise and placed them in his library."

Ala-u-Din was afterwards a prisoner in the hands of Sultan Sanjar, and when he died in A.H. 556 (1161) the Ghuzz were ravaging Afghanistan, and both the Ghorid and Ghaznavid governments for a time disappeared. The Ghorid dynasty, however, revived, and for a while held part of the province of Khorasan; it will be heard of again in this connexion.

The Rise of the Shahs of Khwarazm.—The Shahs of Khwarazm or Khiva were descended from a favourite cup-bearer of Malik Shah named Anushtigin, who has already been mentioned in connexion with that monarch's accession. His successor was Kutb-u-Din Mohamed, whose state the Kara Khitai Turks invaded during his reign. He sent a large army to oppose them, but was defeated and had to pay tribute. This monarch died in A.H. 490 (1097). His son Atsiz remained for many years at the court of Sanjar, where he acted as Chief Cup-bearer, but in A.H. 533 (1138) he obtained permission to proceed to Khiva, where he promptly raised a rebellion. Sanjar, however, easily defeated his vassal, who fled, but shortly afterwards recovered his kingdom.

The Kara Khitai Dynasty.—The founder of the Kara Khitai, or "Black Cathayan," dynasty of Chinese Turkestan was a certain princely adventurer, named Yelui Tashi, a near relation of the Cathayan Emperor. He had aided him in his struggles against the Nuchens, who eventually founded the Kin dynasty on the ruins of the Cathayan Empire,[1] but, realizing that the position of the Emperor was hopeless, Yelui Tashi marched off in A.D. 1123 to seek his fortunes to the north-west of Shensi. There all classes rallied to his standard in recognition of his illustrious descent, and with a large force he marched into Turkestan,

[1] The Cathayan dynasty and its fall are dealt with in *A Thousand Years of the Tartars*, Book VII., by E. H. Parker.

which he annexed, together with Kashgar, Yarkand, and Khotan, and so founded a Buddhist kingdom in the Tarim basin. He subsequently invaded Khwarazm, as related in the previous section, and imposed an annual tribute of thirty thousand pieces of gold. Two years later, having by that time extended his Empire to the confines of Siberia, Yelui Tashi assumed the high title of Gur Khan, or "Universal Lord." This great conqueror died in A.D. 1136, as he was preparing to attack the usurping Nuchens. His immediate successors were minors, and their regents were their female relations; but the tribe for some generations to come maintained its warlike ascendancy over the kingdoms of Central Asia.

The Defeat of Sultan Sanjar by the Kara Khitai, A.H. 536 (1141).—Atsiz was a man of resource, and, not content with recovering his kingdom after his expulsion by Sanjar, was able to avenge himself by encouraging the Kara Khitai to invade the territories of his overlord. A great battle was fought in the valley of Dirgham beyond the Oxus, and Sanjar encountered the first defeat in his hitherto successful career. In this disaster, which was held to be the most crushing ever experienced by Moslems in Central Asia, the Seljuk losses were one hundred thousand men. Its result was that the Kara Khitai temporarily occupied Merv and Nishapur, and Atsiz returned to Khiva as an independent sovereign. Two years later Sanjar had recovered sufficient strength to invade Khiva; but, meeting with little success, he made peace. Atsiz, who died about a year before his great enemy, left to his son a kingdom which stretched as far east as the province of Jand on the Jaxartes. Sanjar's last success was the defeat and capture of the famous "World Burner" of Ghor, who had invaded Khorasan.

The Capture of Sultan Sanjar by the Ghuzz, A.H. 548 (1153).—As we have already had occasion to remark, one of the most potent causes of the overthrow of powerful dynasties has been found in the movements of nomadic tribes which, in their flight from a strong foe, have fought desperately to secure new grazing grounds in a strange country. The Kara Khitai, when they won their empire,

left the sedentary population unmolested, but drove the Ghuzz tribes from their pastures. Crossing the Oxus, the dispossessed nomads obtained permission from Sultan Sanjar to settle in the neighbourhood of Balkh, agreeing to supply 24,000 sheep annually as a tax for their 40,000 families. A dispute as to the quality of the sheep excited a rising, which the governor of Balkh tried in vain to quell. Upon hearing this, in A.H. 548 (1153) Sanjar marched in person with an army of one hundred thousand men to assert his authority. The Ghuzz in alarm offered to submit and pay a heavy fine, but Sanjar would not listen to their overtures, and the nomads fighting desperately for their lives defeated the Seljuk army and took the Sultan prisoner.

The Atrocities committed by the Ghuzz.—The victors, ferocious and intoxicated with success, attacked Merv Shahijan, or "Merv the soul of the Shah," as it was generally termed, which they captured with all the amassed wealth of the Seljuks. Not content with plunder, they tortured the wretched inhabitants, their favourite method being to ram dust down the victim's throat with a stick, the mixture being grimly described as "Ghuzz coffee." From Merv they marched on Nishapur, where "the slain could not be seen for the blood wherein they lay." Their terrible ravages have been depicted by Anwari, whose poem was translated by William Kirkpatrick in A.D. 1785. Two of the stanzas ran :

> Waft, gentle gale, oh waft to Samarcand,
> When next thou visitest that blissful land,
> The plaint of Khorasania plunged in woe :
> Bear to Turania's King our piteous scroll,
> Whose opening breathes forth all the anguished soul,
> And close denotes what all the tortur'd know.
>
> . . . .
>
> The mosque no more admits the pious race ;
> Constrain'd, they yield to beasts the holy place,
> A stable now, where dome nor porch is found :
> Nor can the savage foe proclaim his reign,
> For Khorasania's criers all are slain,
> And all her pulpits levelled with the ground.

Their Ravages in the Kerman Province.—In the pro-

vince of Kerman, too, the Ghuzz made great havoc. They harried in the neighbourhood of the capital, and thence proceeded to the fertile districts of Jiruft and Narmashir, which they laid waste. In A.H. 581 (1185) Malik Dinar arrived from Khorasan, joined the Ghuzz, and with their aid seized the province. Some years later he proceeded to Hormuz, where the Governor gave him money and horses. He also extracted money from Keis, then an emporium of great importance, which had been visited by Benjamin of Tudela only a few years previously. Upon the death of Malik Dinar the Ghuzz in the Kerman province were attacked by the Shabancara[1] or Ik tribe, who dealt them some heavy blows, and they were finally crushed by Atabeg Sad bin Zangi.

The Escape and Death of Sultan Sanjar, A.H. 552 (1157).—Sanjar remained four years a prisoner with the Ghuzz, treated apparently with respect but closely guarded; tradition says that he sat on a throne by day but was placed in a cage at night. He contrived at last to escape when on a hunting expedition, and it is said that when he saw the ruined state of Merv he ceased to wish for life, and died heart-broken in the seventy-third year of his age. He was buried in a splendid mausoleum erected during his lifetime, which in its present half-ruined state struck me as strangely impressive, recalling as it did an illustrious puissant monarch, the last Great Seljuk, who ended a glorious reign as a homeless and heart-broken fugitive.

His Character.—All historians unite in praising the valour, justice, magnanimity, and kindness of Sultan Sanjar, who was so universally beloved that his name was read in the mosques for a full year after his death—an unprecedented compliment. An interesting sidelight is thrown on his character by his enmity to the poet Rashid-u-Din, better known as Watwat, or "the Swallow," from his diminutive stature. When Sanjar was besieging Atsiz in the fortress of Hazar Asp,[2] or "One Thousand

[1] This tribe occupied a district to the east of Shiraz, with Ik, to the north-west of Darab, as their capital. Marco Polo gives Soncara, evidently a corruption of this word, as the "Seventh Kingdom" of Persia.

[2] Situated between Khiva and the left bank of the Oxus.



MAUSOLEUM OF SULTAN SANJAR.

(From *The Heart of Asia.*)

Horses," he instructed Anwari to compose a stanza calculated to annoy his enemy and ordered it to be shot into the town. The lines—somewhat colourless in a translation —ran thus :

> O King! all the dominion of the earth is accounted thine ;
> By fortune and good luck the world is thine acquisition :
> Take Hazar Asp to-day with a single assault,
> And to-morrow Khwarazm and a hundred thousand horses shall be thine!

The stanza was duly received, and the following reply, inspired by Watwat, was shot back :

> If thine enemy, O King, were Knight Rustam himself,
> He could not carry off from thy Hazar Asp a single ass!

Stung by the retort, Sanjar gave orders for Watwat to be kidnapped, and when some time afterwards he was caught, directed that he should be cut into seven pieces, a sentence which does little to support the Sultan's reputation for magnanimity. However, a courtier said, "O King! I have a request to prefer ; Watwat is a feeble little bird and cannot bear to be divided into seven pieces : order him, then, to be merely cut in two!" Sanjar laughed and the poet was pardoned.

The Revival of the Caliphate.—During the heyday of the Seljuk dynasty the Caliphs were mere puppets, but Mustarshid, who was Caliph for seventeen years from A.H. 512 (1118), took advantage of the intestine wars then raging to aim at independence. He achieved his object for a while, but on being attacked by Zengi, the famous adversary of the Crusaders, he was forced to submit. In the end he was assassinated, as was also his son and successor Rashid, but under Muktafi the independence of the Caliphate became more marked. Nasir, who succeeded to the Caliphate in A.H. 575 (1180), opened up relations with Khwarazm, and instigated Tekish to attack Toghril, the Seljuk ruler of Irak. The attack succeeded, Toghril was slain, and his head was sent to Baghdad. The victor, who handed over some Persian provinces to the Caliph, was recognized by Nasir as the supreme ruler of the East. But these friendly

relations did not endure, and when Ala-u-Din Mohamed endeavoured to depose the Caliph, as mentioned below, the latter appealed to the far-off Chengiz Khan. In other words, the head of Islam invited a horde of Mongol pagans to attack a Moslem state.

The Khwarazm Dynasty at its Zenith.—The death of Sultan Sanjar was the signal for the break-up of his dominions. Il-Arslan succeeded his father Atsiz on the throne of Khiva, and, like him, suffered defeat at the hands of the Kara Khitai—in A.H. 568 (1172). In the following year he died, and civil war broke out between his two sons, Tekish and Sultan Shah Mahmud, in which the latter was aided by Muayyid, the Governor of Nishapur. Tekish inflicted a crushing defeat on his brother, who took refuge with the Ghorids, and Muayyid was captured and cut in two. In A.H. 588 (1192) Tekish killed the Kara Khitai receiver of tribute, and in retaliation Sultan Shah's claims were supported by the incensed Gur Khan. In order to protect his kingdom, Tekish caused the Oxus valley to be flooded, and the campaign produced no definite result. Sultan Shah, however, was helped in a descent on Sarakhs, which he captured, and his expulsion of the Ghuzz from this district led to their migration to the Kerman province. Sultan Shah afterwards took Nishapur, and until his death in A.H. 589 (1192) was a thorn in the side of his elder brother. Upon being freed from this permanent source of danger, Tekish in A.H. 590 (1194) overthrew Toghril III., the last Seljuk to rule in Persia, and added the greater part of Western Persia to his empire.

In A.H. 596 (1200) Ala-u-Din Mohamed, whose career resembles that of Sanjar, succeeded to the throne and extended his empire in every direction with such success that in a few years Balkh to the north and Kerman to the south acknowledged his suzerainty. He now deemed himself strong enough to challenge his Kara Khitai overlords, the murder of a receiver of tribute once again constituting the act of defiance. He invaded the territory of the Kara Khitai, and in his first campaign suffered a severe defeat. In the following year, however, in conjunc-



From a photograph by the Author.

THE SHRINE OF HAZRAT-I-SULTAN, DARRAGAZ (PILGRIMS IN THE FOREGROUND).

(Erected by Muayyid, Governor of Nishapur, and formerly Mirror-bearer to Sultan Sanjar.)

126

tion with Othman of Samarcand and aided by the treachery of Guchluk, as detailed in Chapter LV., he retrieved his lost laurels and was able to annex the western provinces of the Kara Khitai Empire. In A.H. 607 (1210), the year following this successful campaign, he captured Samarcand and, killing Othman who had accepted his suzerainty but had rebelled, made it his capital.

But this did not complete the conquests of Mohamed, for he annexed the Indian provinces of the Ghorid dynasty, and finally absorbed the two provinces of Ghor and Ghazna. In the archives of Ghazna letters were found from the Caliph Nasir, urging the Ghorid Princes to unite with the Kara Khitai against Khwarazm. Incensed at this proof of hostility, in A.H. 612 (1216) Mohamed summoned a council at Khiva, which deposed Nasir as an assassin and enemy of the faith, and nominated a descendant of Ali to the Caliphate. Thus, fortified with legal documents, he advanced into Persia, captured Sad, the Atabeg of Fars, and put to flight the Atabeg of Azerbaijan. Mohamed was met by an envoy of the Caliph, whom he treated with contempt, and from Hamadan he was marching against Baghdad, which lay at his mercy, when an extraordinary fall of snow accompanied by extreme cold caused him to abandon the enterprise, and Baghdad was saved.

The Atabegs.—To complete the survey of the dynasties into which Persia had again been broken up, some account must be given of the Atabegs or "Regents." This was a title conferred upon the slaves, or their descendants, who acted as "father-lords"—for that is the exact meaning of the word—to their young masters, and in many cases gained independence and founded dynasties. Salghar, from whom the Fars dynasty was descended, was the chief of a Turkoman band which joined Toghril Beg, and was taken into his service. The member of the family who actually founded the dynasty was Sunkur, who gained possession of Fars in A.H. 543 (1148) and maintained his independence against the Seljuks. He was an excellent ruler and was devoted to Shiraz, his capital. The two next Atabegs call for no particular

notice, and we come to Sad, who crushed the accursed Ghuzz and annexed the Kerman province in A.H. 600 (1204).

A short time after this event the unhappy province was invaded by an army from Khiva, which laid siege to the capital without effect. In the end terms were arranged, and the Khivans remained in possession. Sad also made a successful raid on Isfahan. He became tributary to Ala-u-Din, whose army he met near Rei when the Shah of Khwarazm was marching towards Baghdad. The Atabeg, with only seven hundred men, promptly attacked and defeated a large body of Khivan troops; but he fell off his horse and was taken prisoner. He excused himself for his mad act by stating that he was not aware that the army was that of Khiva, and, having agreed to pay an annual tribute to Khwarazm and to give his daughter to Jalal-u-Din, the heir-apparent, he was dismissed with honour. In A.H. 623 (1226) Sad was succeeded by Abubekr, famous as the patron of the poet Sadi, who had taken his title from Sad's name. Abubekr showed much foresight in conciliating Chengiz Khan, by which act of policy he maintained his own dynasty and saved Fars from the appalling calamities that befell other parts of Persia.

These Atabegs of Fars were the most famous, but there was also a dynasty of Atabegs of Azerbaijan, which ruled from A.H. 531 (1136) to A.H. 622 (1225). This family, however, never attained to more than local importance. A Luristan dynasty was also established by means of a force sent from Fars, and held sway from A.H. 543 (1148) to A.H. 740 (1329). Its reigning prince made terms with the Mongols, and, as will be seen in Chapter LVII., Abaga owed his life to the courage of a member of the family.

The End of a Great Period.—In history it is not always easy to discover the true dividing lines, but the Mongol invasion which swept across Asia is unmistakable, for it inflicted a blow from which Moslem civilization never entirely recovered. Not only were entire populations blotted out of existence, but the cataclysm culminated in

the sack of Baghdad and the murder of the Caliph, after which the Caliphate, the spiritual centre of Islam, ceased to exist. This marks the end of what was in many ways a great period.

Nothing is more interesting to one deeply interested in the welfare of Persia than to watch how in the Abbasid period Persian superiority in everything but the bravery born of fanaticism reasserted itself, how when the arts of peace flourished, Persian ascendancy was re-established, and how later on Persian dynasties once more began to reign in Iran.

Little can be gleaned of the condition of the masses at this period, but it is reasonable to suppose that it depended almost entirely on the strength or weakness, the justice or the injustice, of the monarch and his governors. There is no doubt that, as a rule, there was terrible oppression, for this is the normal state in the East under an Asiatic government. At the same time it does not altogether follow that the life of the masses was unhappy because they were misgoverned. In many cases, especially where villages escape assessment or can bribe an assessor, taxes are extremely light, and the Persian always loves the excitement attending the uncertain incidence of the *maliat*, or revenue.

سلام کن ز من ای باد مر خراسان را — مر اهل فضل و خرد را نه عام و نادان را
خبر بیاور از ایشان بمن چو داده بوی — ز حال من بحقیقت خبر مر ایشان را
بگویشان که جهان سرو من چو چنبر کرد — بمکر خویش و خود اینست کار گیهان را
نگر که تان نکند غره عهد و پیمانش — که او وفا نکند هیچ عهد و پیمان را

FROM THE "DIWAN" OF NASIR-I-KHUSRU.
[Tabriz edition in the British Museum (*Pers.* 798).]

CHAPTER LIV

PERSIAN LITERATURE BEFORE THE MONGOL INVASION

Bear before me to Khorasan, Zephyr, a kindly word,
To its Scholars and men of learning and not to the witless herd,
And having faithfully carried the message I bid thee bear,
Bring me news of their doings, and tell me how they fare.
I, who was once as the cypress, now upon Fortune's wheel
Am broken and bent, you may tell them ; for thus doth Fortune deal,
Let not her specious promise you to destruction lure :
Ne'er was her covenant faithful ; ne'er was her pact secure.

The *Diwan* of NASIR-I-KHUSRU.

The Birth of Persian Literature.—It is important once again to draw attention to the fact that, although for many generations after the triumph of Islam Arabic was the only vehicle of thought and literature, much of this literature was the work of Persian intellects. As the years passed and Persia recovered from the Arab invasion, her native tongue began to reassert its claims, just as, some centuries later in England, the despised language of the conquered Saxons began to be used in preference to the French of the Norman conquerors.

The birth of a post-Islamic Persian literature[1] is believed to date from the era of the Saffarid dynasty, and constitutes one of its strongest claims to affectionate remembrance. Dolatshah, the author of the famous *Lives of the Poets*, gives a charming anecdote in which

[1] For this chapter I have especially consulted Professor Browne's work. I have also found *Persian Literature* by Claud Field of use.

the little son of Yakub bin Lais is represented as lisping the first Persian verse, and this, mere legend though it may be, is of considerable significance as showing popular belief on the subject. It is reasonable to suppose that Persian poetry may have existed in Sasanian times, and legends tell of Barbad, court poet of Khusru Parviz, but as already stated in Chapter XLI. no traces of it are to be found; for all practical purposes such poetry may be said to have come into being rather more than a millennium ago, under the semi-independent rulers who governed various fragments of the old Persian Empire.

During this period of one thousand years the changes in the Persian language have been astonishingly small. In English literature it is not every one who can enjoy Chaucer, because there is much that is archaic and unfamiliar in the language, but Persian poetry has come down to us fully developed, and is perhaps easier to understand in its early natural simplicity than in the more ornate artificiality which became, and has remained, the standard of taste.

The Persian is naturally of a poetical temperament, and in pleasing contrast to the latest songs of the music-hall heard in England is the classical poetry frequently recited even by muleteers, while the educated classes can quote freely from the great writers.

One of Browne's favourite authors, Nizami al-Arudi of Samarcand, gives a curious definition of poetry which is worth quoting. "Poetry," he says, "is that art whereby the poet arranges imaginary propositions and adapts the deductions with the result that he can make a little thing appear great and a great thing small, or cause good to appear in the garb of evil and evil in the garb of good. By acting on the imagination he excites the faculties of anger and concupiscence in such a way that by his suggestion men's temperaments become affected with exultation or depression; whereby he conduces to the accomplishment of great things in the order of the World."

In the present chapter I make no attempt to condense into a few pages the classical age of Persian literature, and

I propose only to touch very briefly on a few of the stars in the literary firmament—which are cited in chronological order rather than in groups—without making any pretensions to deep knowledge of the subject, which could be acquired only by a lifetime of study.[1]

Rudagi.—The first great poet of Persia after the advent of Islam was Rudagi, who flourished in the first half of the tenth century; among the most famous of his poems is one which he improvised at the request of the army, to induce his royal patron to quit Herat for the capital. It runs, in Browne's felicitous translation, as follows:

> The sands of Oxus, toilsome though they be,
> Beneath my feet were soft as silk to me.
> Glad at the friend's return, the Oxus deep
> Up to our girths in laughing waves shall leap.
> Long live Bukhara! Be thou of good cheer!
> Joyous towards thee hasteth our Amir!
> The Moon's the Prince, Bukhara is the sky;
> O Sky, the Moon shall light thee by and by!
> Bukhara is the Mead, the Cypress he;
> Receive at last, O Mead, thy Cypress tree!

On hearing these lines, the Samanid Amir Nasr descended from his throne, mounted the sentry-horse and started off in such haste towards his capital that his riding boots had to be carried after him! Few ballads can have had immediate success of such a practical kind.

Al-Biruni.—As I have shown in Chapter LII., Persia towards the close of the tenth century of our era was divided up among various dynasties, all of which were patrons of literature, and more especially of poets. Of surpassing splendour was the brilliant galaxy that adorned the court of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna, who not only attracted men of letters to his court, but used all his power with weaker princes to secure their leading literary stars. A classical instance is his request to Mamun, Prince of Khwarazm,[2] to send al-Biruni and Avicenna to Ghazna. The former went willingly, but Avicenna refused to go and took refuge at the court of Kabus.

[1] Persian poetry falls generally under one of the following headings: 1. *Kasida*, elegiac or satirical poems. 2. *Rubai* (pl. Rubaiat), quatrain (our epigram). 3. *Masnavi*, double-rhymed poem, the vehicle of epic and didactic poetry.

[2] He was a member of the first and less famous dynasty.

Al-Biruni[1] was badly treated by Mahmud, who behaved at times like a spoilt child, but he remained at Ghazna and after the death of his royal patron published the second of his great works, the *Indica*. *The Chronology of Ancient Nations* had been published thirty years earlier and dedicated to Kabus. Of al-Biruni it may be said that in addition to his vast learning he possessed a fine critical faculty and a sense of proportion, which, combined with his devotion to the truth, make his writings invaluable to the student; they almost seem to be the work of some deeply-read modern European.

Avicenna.—Abu Ali bin Sina was born near Bokhara in A.D. 980, and, as already related, won the favour of the Samanid Prince Noh at the early age of seventeen by his skill as a physician. When the Samanid dynasty fell he proceeded to the court of Khwarazm, but was forced to quit it, as Mahmud insisted on his presenting himself at Ghazna. Unwilling to do this, he fled by way of Tus to Gurgan, where he was honourably received by Kabus. Upon the deposition of the Ziyarid prince he finally proceeded to the court of the Buwayhid, Ala-u-Dola, at Isfahan, where he died at the age of fifty-seven.

Avicenna was among the very greatest of the many illustrious sons of Iran, and by carrying on and developing the science of Hippocrates and Galen and the philosophy of Aristotle and Plato he exercised an influence on the best brains of both the East and the West, not only during his lifetime but for many generations after his death; his books, translated into Latin, remained the standard works of Europe from the twelfth to the seventeenth century.

Firdausi.—Supreme among the poets at the court of Mahmud of Ghazna was Abul Kasim, famous under his title Firdausi, the author of the great national epic the *Shahnama*. According to the *Chahar Makala*, he was a *dihgan* or cultivator[2] of the village of Bazh in the

[1] Browne in his *History of Persian Literature*, vol. i. p. 97, tells a delightful story of al-Biruni's adventures at Ghazna.

[2] Browne translates this word "a small squire," but this is apparently incorrect. To quote from a report on agriculture written by me: "The unit of the plough includes two men, one of whom is known as the *Salar* and the other as the *Dihgan*. The duty of the

Tabaran district of Tus.[1] This village I have been fortunate enough to identify with the modern Paz or Faz, situated twelve miles to the north of Meshed and three or four miles south of Rizan, which is mentioned below. The poet completed his great epic after a quarter of a century of work in A.D. 999, and ten years later took it to the court of Mahmud. Owing to intrigues and imputations of lack of orthodoxy, the beggarly sum of twenty thousand *dirhems*, or less than £400, was all that Firdausi was granted, instead of a gold *dinar* or half guinea for every couplet, as he was led to expect. In his bitter disappointment he divided the money between a bathman and a sherbet-seller, and then fled, in the first place to Herat and finally to Tabaristan. By way of revenge, he castigated Mahmud in a satire which in Browne's translation runs :

> Long years this *Shahnama* I toiled to complete,
> That the King might award me some recompense meet,
> But naught save a heart wrung with grief and despair
> Did I get from those promises empty as air !
> Had the sire of the King been some Prince of renown,
> My forehead had surely been graced by a crown !
> Were his mother a lady of high pedigree,
> In silver and gold had I stood to the knee !
> But, being by birth, not a prince but a boor,
> The praise of the noble he could not endure !

The years passed, and Mahmud was in India, where he encamped close to a strong fortress held by a rebellious chief to whom he had despatched an envoy. He remarked to his Vizier, "I wonder what reply the rebel will have given." The Vizier quoted :

> And should the reply with my wish not accord,
> Then Afrasiab's field, and the mace, and the sword !

"Whose verse is that," inquired Mahmud, "for he must have the heart of a man ?" The Vizier replied that it

---

latter is to plough the land and to sow the seed, and of the former to water the land. Both are on an equality when the harvest is divided, but the *Salar* is, generally speaking, the senior partner." My Persian friends assure me that Firdausi was a man of quite humble origin and not originally a landowner, even on a small scale.

[1] *Vide* my "Historical Notes on Khurasan," *J.R.A.S.*, October 1910. The map attached to the plan of Tus (Tabaran) shows the various places referred to and gives the sites of the "twin-cities" of Tabaran and Nokan, which I have identified.



From a photograph by the Author.

THE SITE OF FIRDAUSI'S TOMB.

was written by Firdausi, whereupon the Sultan confessed his deep regret that he had disappointed the poet and promised that he would send him something. Accordingly, upon the arrival of Mahmud at Ghazna, sixty thousand *dinars*' worth of indigo was despatched to Tabaran on the royal camels, with the monarch's apologies. But, as the train of camels bearing the royal bounty entered Tabaran by the Rudbar Gate, the corpse of Firdausi was borne forth from the Rizan Gate. The daughter of the poet refused the tardy gift, and, as Jami wrote five centuries later :

Gone is the greatness of Mahmud, departed his glory,
And shrunk to "*He knew not the worth of Firdausi*," his story.

I have quoted from the *Shahnama* more than once, but the great epic entirely loses its sonorous majesty in a translation. It contains all the legends as well as all the history of Persia known to its author, who drew on Sasanian works and was faithful to his authorities.[1] The result is a poem which appeals to Persians as nothing else does in their language, which makes them glow with pride at the valour of their forbears and unites them in their intense pride of race. Listening to its lines declaimed by some fiery tribesman who can neither read nor write, I have realized that on such occasions the Persian lays bare his very soul.

Browne frankly confesses that he cannot appreciate the *Shahnama*, but the late Professor Cowell wrote the following noble eulogy : "Augustus said that he found Rome of brick, and left it marble ; and Firdausi found his country almost without a literature, and has left her a poem that all succeeding poets could only imitate and never surpass, and which, indeed, can rival them all even in their peculiar styles, and perhaps stands as alone in Asia as Homer's epics in Europe. . . . His versification is exquisitely melodious, and never interrupted by harsh forms of construction ; and the poem runs on from beginning to end, like a river, in an unbroken current of harmony. Verse after verse ripples on the ear and washes up its tribute of rhyme ; and we stand, as it were, on the

[1] *Vide* Chapter XLI. p. 506.

shore, and gaze with wonder into the world that lies buried beneath—a world of feeling and thought and action that has passed away from earth's memory for ever, whilst its palaces and heroes are dimly seen mirrored below, as in the enchanted lake of Arabian story." Happy is Firdausi to have inspired such a splendid encomium!

The Siasat-Nama.—In Chapter LII. some account has been given of the Nizam-ul-Mulk as statesman and administrator, and it was mentioned that he was also the author of the *Siasat-Nama*, or "Treatise on the Art of Government." This great work comprises fifty chapters, treating of royal duties, royal prerogatives, and administration. It is written in simple language, and as it embodies the views of the greatest of Persian administrators, who adorns his narrative with numerous historical anecdotes, it is one of the most valuable Persian prose works in existence.

Nasir-i-Khusru.—Reference has also been made to Nasir-i-Khusru, in the capacity of Ismaili propagandist. But he was poet and traveller as well. The record of his adventures is contained in a work termed *Safar-Nama*, or "Treatise of Travel," which gives in simple language the details of his journey from Merv to Nishapur, Tabriz, and across Asia Minor to Aleppo. He then performed the pilgrimage to Mecca by way of Jerusalem, and finally reached Cairo in A.H. 439 (1047). In Egypt he was initiated into the esoteric doctrines of the Ismailis, and was awarded the title of *Hujjat*, or "Proof," in Khorasan. He gives a most interesting account of the prosperity, good order, and justice prevailing under the Fatimite Caliphs in Egypt, whence after a stay of two or three years he returned to Khorasan. On this journey he followed a southern route, visiting Isfahan, Nain, Tabas, Tun and Sarakhs; of these, Tabas and Tun afterwards became well-known Ismaili centres. Of his poetry, the *Diwan* is famous, its main theme being a strong insistence on the Ismaili view of allegorical interpretation. As so many of the great men of the period hailed from Khorasan, I have quoted a stanza from his poem addressed to them, by way of heading to this chapter.



From a photograph by the Author.

FAZ, THE BIRTHPLACE OF FIRDAUSI.

136a

Omar Khayyam.—Omar Khayyam, or the "Tent Maker," is the best known of Persian poets in England and America, owing to the genius of FitzGerald,[1] indeed it has been calculated that more than ninety per cent of the ladies who enter the Oriental Library at the British Museum ask some question about the bard of Nishapur. But if his name is brought up among Persians they will reply, "Omar Khayyam was a philosopher and an astronomer." In other words, he is famous in Persia as a philosopher and for his labours in connexion with the Jalali era, referred to in Chapter LII., and his reputation does not in any way rest on his quatrains.[2]

As already mentioned, he was a friend and, according to one account, school-fellow of the Nizam-ul-Mulk, who granted him a pension. The oldest account we possess of him is in the *Chahar Makala* of Nizami-al-Arudi, in the section, it is to be noted, which treats of astrologers and astronomers. Here is given the original story of the poet's saying: "My grave will be in a spot where the trees will shed their blossoms on me twice a year." Nizami states that in A.H. 530 (1135) he visited the tomb of the deceased Omar, "seeing that he had the claim of a master on me . . . and his tomb lay at the foot of a garden-wall, over which pear-trees and peach-trees thrust their heads, and on his grave had fallen so many flower-leaves that his dust was hidden beneath the flowers." This disposes of the mistaken idea that Omar was buried beneath a rose-bush. On the dry Iranian plateau, where nature is scanty in her gifts, the truly beautiful peach and pear and other fruit blossoms play a far larger part than in rainy England, where vegetation is so rich and luxuriant.

I have twice passed through Nishapur and on each

[1] Cowell wrote: "FitzGerald's translation is so infinitely finer than the original that the value of the latter is such mainly as attaches to Chaucer's or Shakespeare's prototypes." This may seem to be an exaggeration, but in my humble opinion it is true.

[2] Sir Mortimer Durand once visited the late Shah Nasir-u-Din to proffer a request from the Omar Khayyam Club that the tomb of the poet should be repaired. The Shah was astonished and said, "Do you mean to tell me that there is a club connected with Omar Khayyam? Why, he has been dead for a thousand years. We have had a great many better poets in Persia than Omar Khayyam, and indeed I myself——" and then he stopped.

occasion visited the poet's tomb, which, as the illustration shows, is situated in an open wing of a shrine erected by Shah Abbas in memory of Mohamed Mahruk, a forgotten relation of the Imam Riza. The Shrine is set in a formal Persian garden, divided into four plots by cobbled paths, which is by no means lacking in charm. Fruit-trees are grown in it, and their blossoms still fall on the tomb of the poet, which is cased with white plaster, but bears no stone or inscription.

As to his famous quatrains, each of which, it is to be remembered, is a complete unit, there is no doubt that Omar wrote quatrains, but some of those attributed to him are claimed to have been written by other poets, Avicenna, for example, being the author of at least one of the best known. When all is said, the fact remains that Omar Khayyam, as interpreted by the genius of FitzGerald, has touched a chord in our Anglo-Saxon prosaic nature, and has thereby helped to bridge the deep gulf which separates the dreaming East from the material West.

The Kabus Nama.—No Persian work with which I am acquainted is more interesting or amusing to read than the book of moral precepts and rules of life composed in A.D. 1082 by Kei-Kaus, the grandson of Kabus, the Ziyarid prince. It deals in a charming and witty fashion with duty towards parents, age and youth, hunting, polo, marriage, education, the sciences of medicine, astrology and mathematics; indeed, few subjects are ignored and we gain a real insight into the Oriental point of view, everything being analysed in the most simple language by a writer who anticipated the Polonius of Shakespeare and also the Badminton Library. Incidentally, some fifty anecdotes, many of historical value, enrich the work.[1]

Al-Ghazali.—Khorasan was a rich nursery of genius, and among its great men Al-Ghazali, the famous theologian of Tus, ranks high. To quote Browne: "He did more than any one else to bring to an end the reign of philosophy in Islam, and to set up in its stead a devotional

[1] Its importance is indicated by the fact that it is being translated into English by E. Edwards for the Gibb Memorial Series.



From a photograph by Major J. W. Watson.

THE TOMB OF OMAR KHAYYAM.

(The actual tomb appears in the open wing to the left of the picture.)

138a

mysticism which is at once the highest expression and the clearest limitation of the orthodox Mohamedan doctrine." This eminent religious leader was born in A.H. 450 (1058) and attracted the notice of the Nizam-ul-Mulk, who appointed him a Professor in his Baghdad college, to which I have already referred. After some years of absence he returned to Nishapur, and finally to his home at Tus, where he died at the age of fifty-one, venerated by all and bearing the honourable title of *Hujjat-ul-Islam*, or "The Proof of Islam." It is of special interest to note that in 1912 the authorities of the British Museum acquired what is believed to be a unique copy of his work on the doctrines of the Ismailis and other esoteric and unorthodox sects, which should prove to be of great value to the student.

Muizzi.—We have now come to the later Seljuk period, which Browne terms "the period of Sanjar," whose writers, both in prose and in verse, are as brilliant as those of the preceding period; indeed, it is difficult to decide which are the most worthy of mention. The poet-laureate of Sanjar was Amir Muizzi, and I quote a few lines from one of his odes, if only to show how early the artificial poem superseded the easy and to me charming simplicity of Rudagi.

Her face were a moon, if o'er the moon could a cloud of musk blow free;
And her stature a cypress, if cypresses bore flowers of anemone.
For if to the crown of the cypress-tree could anemone clusters cling,
Perchance it might be accounted right such musk o'er the moon to fling.
For her rounded chin and her curved tress, alack! her lovers all
Lend bended backs for her polo-sticks and a heart for the polo ball!
Yet if hearts should ache through the witchery of the Harut-spells of her eye,
Her rubies twain are ever fain to offer the remedy.

To quote Browne: "Thus in the four couplets we have the familiar comparison of a beautiful face to a moon, of a mass of black and fragrant hair to musk, of a tall and graceful figure to the cypress, of red cheeks to the anemone, of the chin and heart respectively to a ball, of the back of one bent down by age or sorrow to a polo-stick, of the

lips to rubies, and of witching eyes to Harut, the fallen angel, who teaches magic to such as seek him in the pit where he is imprisoned at Babylon." This is admirably put, and it may incidentally explain why the European does not as a rule care for, or admire, Eastern poetry.

Nizami-al-Arudi.—Frequent references have been made to the *Chahar Makala*, or "Four Discourses," of Nizami, which is a mine of useful information and throws a clear light on the life of the time at the courts of Central Asia. The "Prosodist," as his title may be translated, to avoid confusion with Nizami of Ganja, was at Samarcand, at Nishapur, where he frequented the society of Omar Khayyam, and at Tus, where he visited the tomb of Firdausi. But his post was that of Court-poet to the Ghorid Kings, and in the "Four Discourses" he mentions the "World Burner" as still living—a fact that helps to fix the date of his famous work, which, on Browne's authority, is about A.D. 1155.

Anwari and Khakani.—We now come to a class of panegyrists, the greatest of whom is Anwari, the Poet-laureate and Astrologer of Sultan Sanjar. As Browne writes: "These were poets by profession, artificers in words and sounds, literary craftsmen of consummate skill and ingenuity, and for this very reason they will not bear translation, because their beauty is a beauty of words rather than of thought."[1]

The taunting verse shot into Hazar Asp by order of Sanjar has already been quoted, and also two stanzas of the fine poem on the devastation wrought by the savage Ghuzz, which prove that the poet could write something better than mere formal panegyrics. Khakani was a native of Ganja, the modern Elizabetpol in the Caucasus, and was of low extraction. Having been taken up and taught by an old poet, he became a brilliant star in the literary firmament, notorious for the difficulty of his verse, which is also extremely artificial. His poems were mainly panegyrics, but one inspired by the ruins of the *Tak-i-Kisra*, which I have quoted in Chapter XLI., strikes a loftier note.

[1] Lecture delivered before the Persia Society in 1912.



SHIRIN AND FARHAD.

(From a Persian picture in the Author's collection.)

Nizami.—A very different class of poet, and one whose work it is easy for the European to appreciate, is Nizami, who was also a native of Ganja but who avoided courts. He wrote five romantic poems, famous as the "Five Treasuries." These works enjoy an almost unrivalled popularity to-day, especially *Khusru and Shirin* and *Layla and Majnun*, scenes from which have constantly inspired artists. From the former poem I have already given a description of polo as played by Khusru and his lovely spouse,[1] but the central theme of the romance is the love of Farhad for Shirin, who was promised to him if he cut through Mount Bisitun. The gifted engineer had all but accomplished the impossible, when by Khusru's orders false news was conveyed to him of the death of the beloved one, and he expressed his woe in the following lines :

Alas the wasted labour of my youth !
Alas the hope which vain hath proved in truth !
I tunnelled mountain walls : behold my prize !
My labour's wasted : here the hardship lies !

. . . . .

The world is void of sun and moon for me :
My garden lacks its box and willow tree.
For the last time my beacon-light hath shone ;
Not Shirin, but the sun from me is gone !

. . . . .

Beyond Death's portals Shirin shall I greet,
So with one leap I hasten Death to meet !
Thus to the world his mournful tale he cried,
For Shirin kissed the ground and kissing died.

Attar.—The last poet of the pre-Mongol period is Farid-u-Din, known as Attar, the dealer in otto of roses, or more generally "the druggist." This remarkable man was born at Nishapur about the middle of the twelfth century, and apparently fell a victim to the Mongols when his native city was sacked. The story runs that he was seized by a Mongol who was about to kill him, but was prevented by an offer of one thousand *dirhems* for the old man. The poet, resolved on death, persuaded his captor to await a better offer, which he did.

[1] *Ten Thousand Miles, etc.*, p. 337.

Another Mongol, in scorn of the old man, offered a bag of fodder. "That is my full value, sell me," said Attár. The furious Mongol, realizing the deception, immediately killed him. Attár composed numerous works, the best known of which is the *Pand-nama*, or "Book of Counsels." His fame, however, chiefly rests on the celebrated poem *Mantik-ut-Tayr*, or "The Parliament of the Birds," an allegory in which birds of different species unite in a quest for the Simurgh, the mythical eagle referred to in Chapter XII., the birds typifying Sufi pilgrims and the Simurgh "the Truth." In the end the birds, purified by trials, find that

> Their ancient deeds and undeeds were cleansed away and annihilated from their bosoms.
> The Sun of Propinquity shone forth from them; the souls of all of them were illuminated by its rays.
> Through the reflection of the faces of these thirty birds (si-murgh) of the world they then beheld the countenance of the Simurgh.
> When they looked, that was the Simurgh: without doubt that Simurgh was those thirty birds (si murgh).
> All were bewildered with amazement, not knowing whether they were this or that.

A Criticism.—In concluding this brief notice of some of the great writers of the period, I would urge that the effect of the Persian climate and scenery on its poetry has not been sufficiently considered by European authorities. In the country round Nishapur, which is typical of most other parts of the Iranian plateau, there is a high, naked range to the north, the source of the streams of water on which the irrigated crops depend. The wide, flat plain is destitute of trees, which are grown only in walled enclosures, where they also depend on irrigation. The gardens of Persia, far renowned though they may be, consisted, and still consist, of orchards and poplar groves, with a few paths planted with roses loved by the nightingale and with jasmines. They would not be thought beautiful in Europe, because of the unsightly irrigation channels and the lack of flowers; but to the traveller crossing the sun-blistered plains a combination of shade and running water with nightingales is delightful indeed, and contrasting it with the stony waste outside he forgets

to be critical. It may be objected that in the Caspian provinces there are forests and a luxuriant vegetation with masses of violets, primroses, and snowdrops, but all Persians have ever hated the damp climate with its malarious marshes and heavy air, and they can see none of its beauties. In proof of this we find both Tavernier and Chardin recording that "the air is so unwholesome that the People cry of him that is sent to Command here, Has he robb'd, stolen, or murder'd, that the King sends him to Guilan ?"

Practically all the poets mentioned in this chapter were natives of Khorasan or Central Asia, and were thus accustomed to and affected by its steppe vegetation, its rocky mountain ranges, and its bare plains. On the other hand, they had the advantage of living in one of the finest and most delightful climates in the world, with abundance of brilliant sunshine, an absence of extremes of heat and cold, and, above all, a most stimulating atmosphere, which has helped to endow the gifted sons of Iran with the marked personality that has been their heritage throughout the ages.



MANGU.

CHAPTER LV

THE MONGOL CATACLYSM

They came, they uprooted, they burned,
They slew, they carried off, they departed.

Tarikh-i-Jahan-Gusha.

The Awful Nature of the Mongol Invasion.—The history of Persia as forming part of the Eurasian continent has from one point of view consisted of a record of wave after wave of invasion by tribes whose conquest usually was attended with much human suffering. But no invasion in historical times can compare in its accumulated horrors or in its far-reaching consequences with that of the Mongols,[1] which swept across the entire width of Asia annihilating populations and civilizations, and from which Eastern Europe did not escape. Russia was conquered and annexed; Silesia and Moravia were ravaged after the defeat of the Poles at the battle of Lignitz in A.D. 1241, and another Mongol army under Batu laid waste the plains of Hungary and defeated its monarch at Pesth. Europe apparently lay at the mercy of the invaders; but the death of Ogotay, together with the mountainous nature of Central Europe and its remoteness, saved the tender growth of its civilization. On the other hand, neither Central Asia nor Persia, nor to some extent Russia, has as yet recovered

[1] The special authorities for this period are D'Ohsson's *Histoire des Mongols* and Sir Henry Howorth's *History of the Mongols.* The former especially is based on trustworthy Moslem authorities, among them being Ibn-ul-Athir and the *Tarikh-i-Jahan-Gusha*, or "History of the World-Conqueror," by Ala-u-Din, better known as Juwayni, the Secretary of Hulagu Khan. I have also consulted *A History of the Mongols of Central Asia*, by Ney Elias and Denison Ross.

from this human avalanche of seven centuries ago; and until quite recently in some of the churches in Eastern Europe the litany included, "From the fury of the Mongols, good Lord, deliver us."

D'Ohsson summarizes the facts in the following burning words:

Les conquêtes des Mongols changèrent la face d'Asie. De grands empires s'écroulent; d'anciennes dynasties périssent; des nations disparaissent, d'autres sont presque anéanties; partout, sur les traces des Mongols, on ne voit que ruines et ossements humains. Surpassant en cruauté les peuples les plus barbares, ils égorgent de sangfroid, dans les pays conquis, hommes, femmes et enfants; ils incendient les villes et les villages, détruisent les moissons, transforment en déserts des contrées florissantes; et cependant ils ne sont animés ni par haine ni par la vengeance; à peine connaissent-ils de nom les peuples qu'ils exterminent.

The Origin of the Mongols.—In Chapter XXIX. reference has been made to the Hiung-Nu or Huns who fought with and drove westwards the Yue-chi about 200 B.C.; it is believed by the best authorities that the Mongols were descended from the Huns and that the descendants of the Yue-chi were known as the Uighurs. This is, however, ancient history and we may more profitably turn to contemporary writers for an appreciation of the new "Scourge of God."

The Mongols, or as they were more generally termed in Europe the Tartars,[1] were divided by the Chinese writers into three classes, known respectively as the White, Black, and Wild Tartars, whose civilization decreased with the remoteness of their habitat from the humanizing influence of the sedentary population of China. So far as history, as opposed to legend, is concerned, the Mongols were one of the clans which ranged the country to the north of the Gobi Desert

[1] The correct form is Ta-ta. The sound, however, so closely resembled the classical *Tartarus* that we find Matthew Paris, the Emperor Frederic II., Innocent IV., and St. Louis all playing on the word, the Emperor ending off his letter to Henry III. of England with *ad sua Tartara Tartari detrudentur.* Consequently the form Tartar was generally adopted. The Mongols themselves, who derive their name from *mong* meaning "bold," averred that the Tartars were a tribe whom they had conquered, and this view is adopted by D'Ohsson. The form "Moghul" has been applied to the Mongols by Moslem writers and is frequently used, more especially with reference to the great dynasty founded in India.

and to the south of Lake Baikal. They spent their lives, like other nomads, in breeding cattle and horses and in raiding, and owed allegiance to the dynasty of northern China, which, albeit derived from similar stock, regarded these wild tribesmen with contempt. That they stood very low in the scale of civilization is shown by the words of Ibn-ul-Athir, one of D'Ohsson's chief authorities: "As for their religion, they worship the sun when it arises, and regard nothing as unlawful, for they eat all beasts, even dogs, pigs, and the like."

In the main Carpini and Rubruquis,[1] whose missions will be referred to later on, corroborate this testimony to their evil traits, but give credit for splendid discipline, bravery, and endurance: the Mongols' archery and horsemanship, too, were superb. Their arrogance after their conquests, like that of the Arabs, was unbounded. We read in Russian history that the princes of the country were bound to attend the Mongol Khans whenever ordered, and among other humiliations were forced to lick up any drops which fell from the Khan's cup as he drank! Their filthiness was abominable, washing being unknown, and it is related of Chengiz that he would not allow the word "dirty" to be used. When travelling in Ladakh some twenty-five years ago, I was informed that a rare sun-bath on the roof for the children was the only form of cleansing the body practised there. In Central Asia and Persia, where the Mongols are all Moslems, they are still a dirty race, but the evil is mitigated by the strictness of the rules of Islam on the subject of ablution.

The true Mongols have almond-shaped eyes; they are beardless and generally short in stature, but a virile race, and, though clumsy-looking on foot, are born riders. At the same time, in the struggle for wealth they rarely succeed at the present day against the more astute Persians, and in Khorasan, at any rate, they occupy much the same position as the Italians and Eastern Europeans in America.

Yissugay, the Father of Chengiz Khan.—The ancestors of Chengiz Khan are lost in the mists of legend, but

[1] *Carpini and Rubruquis*, edited by Dr. Raymond Beazley; and *The Journey of Friar William of Rubruck*, edited by W. W. Rockhill (both for the Hakluyt Society).



A NOMAD OF THE PERIOD OF CHENGHIZ KHAN.

(From Pien-i-teen.)

of his immediate forbears D'Ohsson gives some details which show that they were tributary to the Nuchens, the Conquerors of the Cathayan line, who are also known as the Kin dynasty. At the hands of the Nuchens a member of the family of Chengiz, in punishment for the act of a relation who had killed some of the royal officers, was nailed to a wooden ass, a terrible punishment reserved for rebel nomads. This deed called for vengeance, and we first hear of Yissugay in the successful raid which followed, when its leader, Khubilay, defeated a Kin army and carried off rich booty. Khubilay's brother, Bartam Bahadur,[1] had four sons, of whom the third, Yissugay Bahadur, was elected chief of the tribe. He was evidently an active and brave chief who subjugated the neighbouring clans and made them fight his battles. His growing power alarmed the Kin dynasty, which in pursuance of its usual policy incited the Buyr-Nur Tartars to attack Yissugay, and the latter died fighting against what was probably an unexpected onslaught.

The Rise of Chengiz Khan, A.D. 1175–1206.—In A.D. 1162 a son was born to Yissugay, whom he named Temuchin in memory of a chief whom he had slain, and on his death, in A.D. 1175, this boy of thirteen succeeded to the headship of the tribe. As might be supposed, the little confederacy broke up, refusing to obey so young a lad, and Temuchin, after suffering many hardships and privations, was on one occasion taken prisoner. But he was born under a lucky star, and gained victory after victory until his reputation rivalled that of his father. The Buyr-Nurs after falling on Yissugay had invaded China, and the Kin Emperor induced the powerful tribe of Keraits, who were Nestorian Christians, to attack them. Toghril, the chief of the Keraits, who was known as *Wang*, or "King," and who called himself Wang-Khan, was no less a personage than the fabulous monarch so familiar to medieval Europe as Prester John.[2]

[1] *Bahadur* signifies "brave," and it is an interesting fact that *Khan Bahadur*, one of the titles awarded to-day by the Viceroy of India, is derived from this source.

[2] This was one of the questions which deeply interested Sir Henry Yule; *vide* his *Marco Polo*, vol. i. p. 231 (Cordier edition). A section of the Karai—Karait or Kerait is simply a plural form—inhabit the district of Turbat-i-Haydari to the south of Meshed.

This prince was under great obligations to Yissugay, who had protected him when a refugee and had aided him to expel a usurping uncle and to regain the chieftainship. Consequently, when many years later he was again a refugee, having been driven out by his brother, who had the support of the Naiman—also a Christian tribe—he bethought himself of Temuchin, and was welcomed by the young chieftain. In A.D. 1194 we read that Temuchin led a contingent against the Buyr-Nurs under the Kin emperor, who commanded in person, and covered himself with glory in fighting and crushing the family foes. For some years after this campaign Temuchin fought with the tribes on every side and gradually organized his power. In A.D. 1202 he engaged in a trial of strength with his former ally Toghril, who at first defeated him; but in A.D. 1203 he crushed the Keraits, who were thenceforth his subjects.

Some time after this important success Tai Yang Khan, King of the Naimans, attempted to win over Ala Kush-Tekin, chief of the Onguts or White Tartars, with the design of uniting in an attack on Temuchin before he became too powerful. But the Ongut chief informed the intended victim of the plot and he promptly attacked the Naimans, whom he crushed. Their king was killed, but his son, Guchluk, escaped and fled westwards. Among the prisoners taken by Temuchin was Tatatungo, the Uighur Chancellor of Tai Yang, whom the conqueror took into his service. Tradition attributes the rudiments of civilization acquired by the Mongols to this remarkable man, who taught the sons of Chengiz the Uighur tongue and the art of writing, and who maintained his influence under Ogotay, the son and successor of Chengiz. In A.D. 1206, so powerful had Temuchin become, that he was in a position to assemble a *Kuriltay*, or "Diet of the Nobles," and at this historical assemblage he assumed the title of Chengiz Khan,[1] or "The Perfect Warrior."

The Downfall of the Kara Khitai Dynasty.—Guchluk,

[1] This name varies in spelling from the Cambynskan of Chaucer to the Zingis of Gibbon.



KARA KHITAN, SLIGHTLY BEFORE THE PERIOD OF CHENGHIZ KHAN.

(From Pien-i-teen.)

the son of the Naiman chief, who escaped after the defeat of his father, suffered great privations and led a wandering life, but finally reached the court of the Gur Khan. He was treated most kindly and given a daughter of the monarch in marriage, and upon this occasion adopted the Buddhist religion. No sooner had he established his position and collected his scattered tribesmen than he entered into a plot with Mohamed Shah of Khwarazm and with Othman, Prince of Samarcand, to overthrow his benefactor. Although in the first engagement he was defeated, the forces of Khwarazm and Samarcand carried all before them, with the result that in A.H. 608 (1212) the Gur Khan was a prisoner in the hands of Guchluk. In his stead the traitor ruled in a kingdom which was restricted to the Tarim basin, with its three cities of Kashgar, Yarkand, and Khotan. The empire of Mohamed was extended eastwards into the heart of Turkestan, and after he had captured and killed his erstwhile ally Othman, Samarcand became his capital.

The Mongol Invasion of Turkestan, A.H. 615 (1218). —It is beyond the scope of this work to deal with the three successful campaigns waged by Chengiz against the Kin dynasty, from whom he seized many of their fairest provinces ; but it is important to note that it was during these campaigns that the rude Mongols learned the necessity for a siege-train, which they afterwards employed with deadly effect. The Great Conqueror subsequently crushed the Merkites, a neighbouring tribe, and in A.D. 1218 made his first movement westwards by despatching an army of twenty thousand men to attack Guchluk. The latter fled without attempting any defence, but was overtaken and put to death.

The Outbreak of Hostilities with Khwarazm.—The relations of Chengiz Khan with the monarch of Khwarazm were at first friendly. The Mongol chieftain despatched an embassy to Mohamed with gifts and a message expressing the hope that the two rulers would live at peace with one another, and declaring that he would look upon Mohamed as his most beloved son. The Khivan monarch, after making enquiries from one of the envoys,

who was a native of Khiva, as to the armies of Chengiz, dismissed the three ambassadors with a friendly reply, although he realized that the invitation to be regarded as a "son" constituted a veiled demand to recognize Mongol superiority.

Not long afterwards Chengiz Khan bought the stock of three Khivan merchants, with whom he sent back Mongol representatives charged to obtain the various products of Khiva in exchange for their pelts. On the arrival of this rich caravan at the frontier town of Otrar, the Governor, apparently in order to obtain possession of their property, imprisoned the members of the party and submitted a report to the monarch that they were spies, as in all probability was the case. In reply he was instructed to execute them, and duly carried out the sentence. Chengiz had undoubtedly received the despatches of the Caliph Nasir, whose intrigues are mentioned in Chapter LIII., and to judge by his action was on the look-out for a pretext such as the impolitic severity of Mohamed gave him. Hearing of the fate which had befallen the trading venture, he sent an embassy demanding the surrender of the governor of Otrar to Mongol vengeance, war being the alternative. Mohamed, blinded by his earlier uninterrupted successes, made war certain by putting the ambassador to death. The first battle was fought against a relatively small Mongol force returning from the pursuit of the Merkites, who had been allies of Guchluk. The Mongol general wished to avoid an action, but the Khivan army attacked and in the end was victorious, although their left wing had been broken, and the day was saved only by a brilliant charge headed by the impetuous Jalal-u-Din, the fighting son of Mohamed.

The Invasion of Transoxiana, A.H. 616 (1219).—The awful torrent of destruction was actually set in motion a year after war had been decided upon, and in A.H. 616 (1219) the Mongol hordes were directed on the Sir Daria at Otrar. Mohamed had collected a great field army of 400,000 men to fight a decisive battle, but was defeated between Ush and Sangar with crushing losses by

Juji, the eldest son of Chengiz. After this he resigned the initiative to the invaders and contented himself with garrisoning his chief cities, in the hope that the Mongols, after ravaging the open country, would return home with their booty. Consequently the task of the Mongols was easy, and Chengiz was able to divide up his columns without much fear that any single one would be attacked by an overwhelming force. To his sons Chagatay and Ogotay the siege of Otrar was assigned; Juji, after defeating Mohamed, continued his march towards the province of Jand to the north, a small force of only five thousand being detached to work upstream to Khojand; and Chengiz himself, accompanied by Tuli, the youngest of his four sons, marched on Bokhara with the main army, ready to accept battle if Mohamed desired to fight for his throne. The siege of Otrar lasted six months, and its Governor, knowing that he was a doomed man, fought to the bitter end; but, as no aid was received from the cowardly Shah of Khiva, the city was at last taken. The Governor held out for another month in the fort, but in spite of desperate bravery was taken alive and brought before Chengiz, who ordered molten silver to be poured into his eyes and ears in retribution for his massacre of the unfortunate merchants. Juji captured Signac after a seven days' siege and Jand itself offered no resistance.

Bokhara was for some days defended by the garrison, twenty thousand strong; but the position was regarded as hopeless, and an attempt to break through was carried out successfully. The Mongols, though surprised, rallied quickly and pursued the fugitives, who were cut to pieces on the banks of the Oxus. Bokhara thereupon surrendered, and Chengiz rode into the great mosque, where the Mongols indulged in an orgy to celebrate their success. The populace was collected and the rich men were obliged to hand over all their wealth. The city was then sacked and afterwards burned, and the wretched inhabitants were divided up among their savage conquerors, whose custom was to use the serviceable men for digging approaches, for erecting the siege-train, and, if necessary, for filling up the ditch of a city with fascines, which were supplemented with

their own bodies. The women were of course the prey of the captors.

From Bokhara Chengiz followed the fertile valley of the Zarafshan to Samarcand, which was strongly garrisoned by forty thousand men. No resistance, however, was attempted; the Turkish section of the garrison surrendered, hoping for good treatment, and massacre was their reward. Of the inhabitants, thirty thousand artificers were distributed among the Mongols, an equal number were taken for use in military operations, and fifty thousand were permitted to ransom themselves, but in most cases were afterwards seized for military operations. Indeed, the whole country was denuded of its population.

The Pursuit of Mohamed and his Death, A.H. 617 (1220).—We must now turn to the cowardly Ala-u-Din Mohamed. He had watched the Mongol irruption from Samarcand as long as it was safe to do so, but when there was danger of being besieged in his capital he fled to Balkh, intending to take refuge at Ghazna. But he changed his mind and proceeded to Nishapur, hoping that the Mongols would return home after acquiring such immense booty. His heroic son Jalal-u-Din in vain begged to be allowed to defend the line of the Oxus, exclaiming with generous heat that by this action they would at any rate avoid the curses of their subjects, who would say, "Up to now they have overwhelmed us with taxes, and in the hour of danger they abandon us to the fury of the Tartars." Mohamed declined either to fight or to relinquish the command of the army to his son, and hearing that the Mongols had crossed the Oxus he fled from Nishapur, much as Darius had fled before Alexander, and along the very same route, although in the opposite direction.

From Samarcand Chengiz had despatched two bodies of troops, each ten thousand strong, with instructions to seek out Mohamed, to hold him if he intended to fight a battle, and to pursue him if he fled. The division of Chebe, passing by Nishapur, ravaged Kuchan, Isfarayin, and Damghan, and, uniting with the division of Subutay before Rei, surprised and sacked that city.

Meanwhile Mohamed had reached Kazvin and intended to make a stand there. While he was organizing an army, news reached him of the capture of Rei, distant less than one hundred miles. His army, infected with the spirit of its monarch, scattered, and Mohamed, after nearly falling into the hands of the Mongols, escaped into Mazanderan, and finally took refuge in a small island off the coast. The craven monarch, though safe at last, was dying, and he passed away leaving behind him a reputation for pusillanimity which has rarely been paralleled in history.

The Siege of Urganj, A.H. 617 (1220).—After the death of Mohamed three of his sons travelled by sea to the Mangishlak peninsula, and on reaching the capital of Khwarazm were warmly welcomed by all classes. An army was collected, but a conspiracy being formed against Jalal-u-Din he was forced to flee with three hundred men. Crossing the desert in sixteen days, he reached Nisa, a few miles to the south-west of modern Askabad, only to find it held by a body of seven hundred Mongols. With the courage of despair the heroic Prince charged and defeated this force and reached Nishapur in safety. Two of his brothers, hearing that a large force was concentrating on Urganj, followed in his track three days later and were killed by the Mongols.

The next operation of Chengiz was to despatch a force under Juji, Chagatay, and Ogotay to besiege the capital of Khwarazm. The Mongols on reaching the city gates were attacked and pursued by the garrison, which was drawn into a carefully prepared ambush, and suffered heavily. Upon the arrival of the main army before Urganj, the wretched Tajiks[1] from other conquered cities were forced to fill up the ditches and the artillery was then placed in position. The Mongols, however, failed in an attempt to capture the bridge uniting the two parts of the town, and owing to quarrels between Juji and Chagatay the conduct of operations was paralysed.

[1] *Tajik* is the term used to denote the sedentary population, as opposed to Turk, which employed in this connexion includes all tent-dwellers. It is the same word as Tazi, which signifies Arab and still survives in the word used to denote the so-called Persian greyhound, which was apparently introduced by the Arab Conquerors.

To remedy this state of affairs, Chengiz gave the supreme command to Ogotay, who ordered an assault. This was successful, and although the inhabitants offered a desperate resistance they were finally obliged to beg for terms, after having kept the Mongols at bay for more than six months. The victors collected the entire populace, and having gathered the artisans into a separate class massacred the other males and enslaved the women and children. After this atrocious act they turned the waters of the Oxus on to the site of the city, and in so doing diverted the river once again into its ancient channel, which led to the Caspian Sea.[1]

The Devastation of Khorasan, A.H. 617 (1220).—After spending the summer in the meadows of Nakhsab, Chengiz opened a fresh campaign by the capture of Termiz on the Oxus, which barred the road to Balkh. It was stormed on the tenth day and all its inhabitants were massacred. He then went into winter quarters close by and ravaged neighbouring Badakshan. In the spring he advanced on Balkh, which offered no resistance. But the conqueror, hearing that Jalal-u-Din was organizing an army at Ghazna, deliberately destroyed the city and massacred its thousands of inhabitants, preferring to leave a reeking charnel house in his rear rather than run the risk of having his communications cut. Meanwhile Tuli had been despatched to complete the sack and ruin of Khorasan, which had already been occupied in parts by Chebe and Subutay, who had left governors in some of the cities. The inhabitants of Tus, seeing that the Mongol ruler was isolated, had risen against him; but the revolt was easily put down by a body of three hundred Mongols stationed at Ustuva, the modern Kuchan, and on their demand even the ramparts of Tus were demolished by the terrified townspeople. Tuli began his march into Khorasan in the autumn of A.D. 1220, preceded by an advance force ten thousand strong, which besieged Nisa to avenge the death of its chief, who had been killed by an arrow shot from the city walls. Here again the town was stormed, and men, women, and children

[1] *Vide* Chapter II. p. 23.

were massacred. Nishapur was not captured at the first attempt, and Togachar, a son-in-law of Chengiz, was killed; but Sabzawar was stormed and its seventy thousand inhabitants were massacred.

The Destruction of Merv and Nishapur.—The first main operation undertaken by Tuli was the capture of Merv Shahijan, the famous capital of Sanjar, which had recovered from the devastation wrought by the Ghuzz and was at the zenith of its prosperity and civilization. In proof of this there is a letter written by Yakut, the eminent geographer, at Mosul, where he had arrived safely from Merv after many narrow escapes. He refers in glowing language to the rich libraries, to the many men of science, and to the numerous authors of Merv, and exclaims in his enthusiasm, "Their children were men, their youths heroes, and their old men saints." He then laments as follows: "The people of infidelity and impiety roamed through these abodes; that erring and contumacious race (the Mongols) dominated over the inhabitants, so that those palaces were effaced from off the earth as lines of writing are effaced from paper, and those abodes became a dwelling for the owl and the raven; in those places the screech-owls answer each other's cries, and in those halls the winds moan responsive to the simoon."

The Mongol prince, having by means of false promises obtained possession of the persons of the leading inhabitants of the doomed city, perpetrated a most horrible massacre of over half a million helpless inhabitants. Ibn-ul-Athir puts the number of victims as seven hundred thousand, and the author of the *Jahan Gusha* at a still higher figure. When it is borne in mind that the inhabitants of the surrounding district would all have fled to the city for protection these numbers are not incredible. Five thousand inhabitants of Merv, who escaped the massacre, were subsequently done to death by a troop of Mongols which was on its way to join the main army, and the place remained desolate until rebuilt more than a century later by Shah Rukh.

From the smoking ruins of what had been Merv, Tuli marched to Nishapur. Preparations had been made

for a vigorous defence, three thousand *balistae* for hurling javelins and five hundred catapults having been mounted on the ramparts. The Mongols on their side made still greater preparations, including seven hundred machines to throw pots of burning naphtha; but in the event they carried the city by assault and massacred every living thing (including the cats and dogs) as a sacrifice to the spirit of Togachar, pyramids of skulls being built as a ghastly memorial of the feat of arms. The buildings were then entirely demolished and the site was sown with barley. I have shot sandgrouse within the area surrounded by the broken-down walls of ancient Nishapur, and I saw crops of barley growing in unconscious imitation of the Mongols' sowing.

The Capture of Herat.—The last great city of Khorasan to be attacked was Herat. There a desperate resistance was offered for eight days, but after the governor had been killed Tuli received the submission of the inhabitants and contented himself with putting the garrison to death.

The Campaign against Jalal-u-Din, A.H. 618 (1221).—Jalal-u-Din after defeating the superior force of Mongol sowars at Nisa, a feat of arms which constituted the first success gained over any body of Mongols in Persia, proceeded to Nishapur. Here he remained three days, and then continued his flight towards Ghazna. One hour after his departure from Nishapur, a detachment of Mongols arrived on the scene and picked up his trail. Jalal-u-Din fled at a great pace, traversing one hundred and twenty miles in the day, but on his arrival at Zuzan, to the south of Khaf, the gates were shut on him. He consequently continued his flight towards Herat, pursued for some distance beyond Zuzan by the Mongols, but finally reached Ghazna in safety.

There anarchy prevailed, but the people rallied to his standard and in a short time he collected an army, with which, in the spring of A.D. 1221, he marched north to the neighbourhood of Bamian. He gained an initial success by killing a thousand Mongols, which speedily brought against him a force of thirty thousand men

under Shiki Kutucu, who had been posted to protect the operations of the main army. This stationing of protecting troops proves that Chengiz was not merely an able tactician, but also studied the military situation from the strategical point of view.

When the two armies met, the right wing of Jalal-u-Din, which fought on foot, was broken, but on being reinforced it rallied, and night closed in on an undecided issue. The following day the Mongol general gave orders for a felt dummy to be tied on each spare horse to make the enemy believe that reinforcements had been received. This ruse was nearly successful, but Jalal-u-Din was a fighting Sultan and inspired his men with such courage that, after a repulse of the Mongols on foot the trumpets sounded a general advance, and the hated foemen were driven off the field, many of them being cut to pieces by the victorious Persians. Most unfortunately the division of the spoils provoked a quarrel which resulted in the desertion of the Ghorid contingent, and Jalal-u-Din, hearing that Chengiz was advancing on Ghazna, found himself unable to hold the line of the Hindu Kush and retreated towards Sind.

To avenge the death of a grandson, the Mongol conqueror wiped Bamian out of existence, not even allowing it to be plundered, but offering it up as a holocaust to the slain prince. He then advanced on Ghazna, which Jalal-u-Din had quitted a fortnight previously, and made a forced march of such rapidity that he overtook the Sultan on the borders of Sind, where the latter was hoping for contingents to join him. Unwilling to fight, Jalal-u-Din prepared to put the Indus between his small force and the pursuing army, but he was too slow and was hemmed in at early dawn. Fighting in the centre with desperate heroism, he attempted to break through, like a tiger charging a ring of elephants, but in vain. At noon he mounted a fresh horse and charged the Mongols ; when they gave way he suddenly turned about, jumped from the high bank into the Indus, and swam across. Chengiz showed himself magnanimous on this occasion, and not only forbade arrows to be

shot at the hero, but held him up to his sons as a model in valour.

Chengiz detached two units to pursue Jalal-u-Din, but they failed to discover him. They then attempted to take Multan, but the heat drove them off, and after ravaging far and wide they rejoined the main army which was returning to Tartary.

In the spring of the following year the city of Ghazna was destroyed for military reasons, and at the same time a force was despatched to annihilate Herat, which had rebelled upon hearing of the success of Jalal-u-Din near Bamian. On this occasion the resistance offered was desperate, but after a siege of six months and seventeen days the city fell, and it is said that more than a million and a half of its inhabitants—an incredible number—were massacred. A short time afterwards a body of troops was sent back to the ruins of the city to search for survivors, who were killed to the number of two thousand.

The Return to Tartary of Chengiz Khan.—Before marching north from India Chengiz Khan ordered the prisoners to clean a large quantity of rice for the army, and, after they had done it, massacred them all. He then in the first instance decided to return to Tartary by way of Tibet, but on realizing the difficulties of the route cancelled these orders, recrossed the Hindu Kush, and proceeded to Bokhara, where he received instruction in the tenets of the Moslem religion and ordered the *Khutba* to be read in his name. He remained inactive in Central Asia for over a year and then moved slowly back to his own country, which he reached in A.D. 1225.

The Devastation of Western and North-Western Persia.—We must now turn to the armies of Chebe and Subutay, which had captured Rei and had pursued Mohamed to the Caspian Sea. Kum was their next objective; Hamadan was spared in the first instance, but Zenjan and Kazvin were treated in the awful Mongol fashion. Tabriz was spared in return for a large sum of money, and the Mongols proceeded to the plain of Moghan, near the south-west corner of the Caspian. Contrary to

expectation, they did not remain stationary but marched into Georgia in mid-winter, and being reinforced by bands of Turkoman and Kurds ravaged the country up to Tiflis. Returning thence they next besieged Maragha, which was destined to be the capital of Hulagu Khan, and this was treated like other cities. The intention of the leaders was to march on Baghdad, and the Caliph Nasir in great alarm attempted to organize a force but failed, partly because of the capture of Damietta by St. Louis, a disaster which drew away some of his chief supporters.

The difficulty of passing the mountain gorges saved Baghdad on this occasion, and the Mongols returned to Hamadan, which they now sacked. From this city they marched on Ardebil, which they also sacked, and then returned to Tabriz, where they were once again bought off. Georgia was revisited, and by a pretended retreat its army was ambushed and cut to pieces. After this exploit the Mongols struck the Caspian Sea at Shamaka, near Baku, and followed it up to Darband. Not content with these limits, the fearless horde passed beyond the Caucasus and drove out the Kipchaks, who fled in terror across the Danube or into Russia. The Muscovite princes organized a force to repel the invaders, but near the Sea of Azov they were defeated and were put to death by being placed under planks, on which the victors sat and feasted. The districts near the Sea of Azov were ravaged, and the Mongols, marching eastwards, crossed the Upper Volga, where they defeated an army of Bulgars. After this remarkable military expedition, during the course of which the Caspian Sea had been almost encircled, they rejoined the main army in Tartary.

Before we conclude this account of the appalling devastation from which Northern Persia and the countries to the north of it suffered, it is to be noted that another Mongol division in A.H. 621 (1224) attacked Rei, Sava, Kum, Kashan, and Hamadan, massacring the inhabitants who had escaped from the earlier invasion.

To sum up, the testimony of all contemporary historians is that wherever the Mongols passed the population

was almost exterminated and the land reverted to desert. In the *Jahan Gusha* we read as follows: "Not one-thousandth of the population escaped," and again, "If from now to the Day of Judgment nothing hinders the growth of population, it cannot reach one-tenth of the figure at which it stood before the Mongol conquest." These words, even with all allowance for exaggeration, express human misery at its deepest, and our finite minds, the products of a civilized age, can barely grasp their full meaning. Most fortunately, Southern Persia escaped the Mongol blast of death, and it was probably owing to this happy circumstance that the recovery was ultimately more rapid than could have been anticipated.

The Death of Chengiz Khan, A.H. 624 (1227).—The last campaign undertaken by Chengiz Khan was the invasion of Tangut, which was overrun and ravaged. The Great Conqueror, feeling his end approaching, appointed Ogotay, his third son, to be his successor and advised his sons to avoid internal strife. He then passed away in the sixty-sixth year of his reign. His body was taken to his Urdu,[1] and, in order to prevent his death from becoming known, every one whom the troops met on the road was killed.

His Character and Genius.—Thus in a river of blood passed to his sepulchre Chengiz Khan, who had destroyed more human beings than any other recorded victorious warrior, and had conquered the largest empire the world had known. It must not be assumed, because of his appalling thirst for blood, that he was lacking in genius. On the contrary, he had shown unquestionable genius in his early career when battling, never daunted, against adverse circumstances, and step by step he built up an empire which raised the despised nomads of Tartary to the lordship of Asia.

His organization was founded on a unit of ten men, whose chief obeyed a centurion, who in turn obeyed the commander of a thousand, and so up to the commanders of divisions. His policy was false, but successful.

[1] The word means "Camp," and "horde" is a corruption of it. The language commonly known as Hindustani is more correctly termed *Urdu*, and derives its name from the fact that it originated in the camp of the Moghul Emperors of Delhi.

Before he attacked a kingdom, a summons to submit was despatched in the following terms, "If you do not submit, how can we tell what will happen? God alone knows!" If the ruler submitted, he was bound to give immediately a large sum of money and the tenth of everything, including his subjects. Mongol governors were then appointed, and the country was ruined by their exactions and atrocities. If resistance was offered and the city was strong, the surrounding country was devastated and treachery was attempted. At this stage of the operations an ambush was frequently successful. If the city still held out, lines were dug round it by prisoners, who also were driven to head the assaults, and attacks in relays gave the besieged no rest. Moreover, the fact that the Mongols possessed themselves of every known military engine, and had even a corp of miners, is sufficient in itself to show the genius for war that distinguished their leader. In the field their tactics were admirable. They understood the art of feigning retreat, of envelopment and of surprise, and, as battle after battle was fought and won against nations employing different methods of warfare, the sum of their experience made them invincible.

The feelings of Chengiz Khan himself may be exemplified in the following saying attributed to him: "The greatest joy is to conquer one's enemies, to pursue them, to seize their property, to see their families in tears, to ride their horses, and to possess their daughters and wives."[1]

[1] *Jami-ul-Tavarikh.*



HULAGU.

CHAPTER LVI

THE EXTINCTION OF THE CALIPHATE BY HULAGU KHAN

Well it were if from the heavens tears of blood on earth should flow
For the Ruler of the Faithful, al-Musta'sim, brought so low.
If, Mohamed, at the Judgment from the dust thy head thou'lt raise,
Raise it now, behold the Judgment fallen on thy folk below!
Waves of blood the dainty thresholds of the Palace-beauties whelm;
While from out my heart the life-blood dyes my sleeve with hues of woe.
Fear vicissitudes of Fortune; fear the Sphere's revolving change;
Who could dream that such a splendour such a fate should overthrow?
Raise your eyes, O ye who once upon that Holy House did gaze,
Watching Khans and Roman Caesars cringing to its portals go.
Now upon that self-same threshold where the Kings their foreheads laid,
From the children of the Prophet's Uncle streams of blood do flow!

Threnody by SADI.

The Division of the Mongol Empire.—By his will Chengiz Khan divided the immense empire which he had founded among his four chief sons, or their families—as in the case of Juji, who had predeceased his father. The division was made by the distribution of clans as appanages rather than by strict territorial limits, which it was probably not his wish to define. The third son, Ogotay, was nominated Khakan, or "Supreme Khan," and to make the position clear I append the following précis by Lane-Poole[1]:

1. *The line of Ogotay*, ruling the tribes of Zungaria; Khakans till their extinction by the family of Tuli.

2. *The line of Tuli*, ruling the home clans of Mongolistan; Khakans after Ogotay's line, down to the Manchu supremacy.

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 205.

3. *The Persian branch of the line of Tuli*: Hulagu and his successors, the Il-Khans of Persia.

4. *The line of Juji*, ruling the Turkish tribes of the Khanate of Kipchak; the Khans of the Golden and White Hordes . . . and finally the Khans of Khiva and Bokhara.

5. *The line of Chagatay*, ruling Mawaranahr or Transoxiana.

In A.D. 1229, two years after the death of Chengiz Khan, a Diet of the Nobles was held at which Ogotay was elected Khakan. He received the homage of all and celebrated his accession by sending forty of the most beautiful Mongol maidens "to serve Chengiz in the other world"; horses too were sacrificed. He then distributed costly gifts among his generals.

Three Great Expeditions.—At this Diet three great military expeditions were projected, the first of which was the despatch of an army thirty thousand strong, under Chormaghun, to attack Jalal-u-Din. The second army, of equal strength, was to conquer Central and Southern Russia, inhabited at that period by Bulgars, Kipchaks, and Sukassines, and the third army, under the immediate command of Ogotay, was to continue the conquest of Northern China.

The expedition against Jalal-u-Din alone concerns Persia directly, but the results of the other two may be mentioned. The campaign conducted by Ogotay resulted in the complete conquest of the Kin empire, which had been only partially reduced during the lifetime of Chengiz Khan; but the Sung dynasty of Southern China was not subdued until Khubilay's reign. In Europe the Mongols carried fire and the sword across Russia to Poland and Hungary from A.D. 1236 to 1241, and so widespread was the alarm that, according to Matthew Paris, in A.D. 1238, "the people of Gothland and Friesland did not dare to come to Yarmouth for the herring fishery."[1]

The death of Ogotay in A.D. 1241 necessitated a new Diet, and this, together with the rugged nature of Central Europe, which was unsuitable for the movements of the

[1] *Chronica Majora*, vol. iii. p. 488.

Tartars, and its remoteness in comparison with China and Persia, probably saved Western Europe. But the Mongols riveted their yoke on Russia and for two centuries its national life was arrested, while it received that Oriental tinge[1] which is so apparent to the western European; or, as Gibbon expresses it, "the deep and perhaps indelible mark which a servitude of two hundred years has imprinted on the character of the Russians."

The Campaign of Jalal-u-Din in India, A.H. 619 (1222).—Having effected his escape from Chengiz Khan by swimming the Indus, Jalal-u-Din collected the remnants of his army to the number of two thousand men, who were destitute of everything but valour. Thanks to this virtue, they were able to rearm and remount themselves, and Jalal-u-Din, learning that he was being pursued by two Mongol divisions, retreated towards Delhi. Its ruler Shams-u-Din Altamish,[2] the best known and most capable member of the so-called "Slave Kings," sent the Sultan splendid gifts, with the hint that the climate of Delhi would not suit his health and that he had better establish himself at Multan. Jalal-u-Din, finding Delhi inhospitable, perforce retraced his steps, and invaded Sind with the aid of reinforcements which had reached him from Persia. But the Slave King was determined not to allow so redoubtable a soldier to establish himself even in the territory of a rival, and a league of Indian princes was formed to drive him out. Thereupon Jalal-u-Din, seeing that resistance to such a combination was hopeless, decided to return to Persia.

His Return to Persia, A.H. 620 (1223).—The dauntless Sultan traversed Makran more or less in the footsteps of Alexander the Great, and like him lost the greater part of his army in its deserts, so that he reached Kerman with only four thousand men. His arrival happened to coincide with the moment at which Borak Hajib, having killed the former Governor, was besieging the capital, and the city opened its gates to Jalal-u-Din. Borak Hajib, to whom we shall return later, at first

[1] There are about five million Tartars still resident in European Russia and a similar number of Jews.

[2] *Mohamedan Dynasties*, p. 295.

treated his sovereign with due respect, but after the capture of Kerman formed a conspiracy against him. Jalal-u-Din was aware of the treacherous designs, but in order to avoid creating a bad impression upon his first return to Persia he ignored the plot, and after spending a month at Kerman marched westwards into Fars. There he was at first treated with cool politeness by the Atabeg Sad, but afterwards became his son-in-law.

Ghias-u-Din.—Upon the retirement of the Mongols from Northern Persia, a younger brother of Jalal-u-Din, by name Ghias-u-Din, had obtained possession of Khorasan, Mazanderan, and Irak. Indolent and voluptuous, this prince was not the man to restore a half-ruined country, and the army transferred its allegiance to his elder brother, who became ruler of Northern Persia, Ghias-u-Din perforce submitting.

The Campaign against the Caliph, A.H. 622 (1225).—After establishing his authority as Shah of Khwarazm, Jalal-u-Din marched to attack the Caliph Nasir, the enemy of his father. The campaign opened with the siege of Shuster, which, however, proved impregnable. He then marched on Baghdad and drew the Caliph's army into an ambush, whereby he gained a decisive victory, pursuing his defeated enemy to the gates of the capital. He did not attempt to take Baghdad, but marched north and invaded and occupied Azerbaijan. Never content to organize the fruits of his brilliant victories, Jalal-u-Din had no sooner won Tabriz than he invaded Georgia, and in two campaigns captured Tiflis, in A.H. 623 (1226). His next exploit was to extirpate a tribe of raiding Turkoman, and in the following year he ravaged the Ismaili territories and also beat a Mongol force at Damghan, to the east of Rei.

The Battle of Isfahan, A.H. 625 (1228).—The Mongols after this defeat appeared in greater force, and pursued a Persian corps of observation to Isfahan, which was the Sultan's headquarters. The Mongol army, composed of five divisions, prepared to besiege the city, but the Sultan marched out, determined to fight in the open. Although deserted by Ghias-u-Din on the battlefield, this

intrepid soldier, who alone of the monarchs of the period faced the dreaded Mongols, engaged the foe. His right wing broke the left wing of the enemy, which it pursued as far north as Kashan, and Jalal-u-Din thought the day won; but on advancing he was attacked by a Mongol *corps d'élite* which broke his left wing. The Sultan cut his way through, and although reported dead reappeared at Isfahan after the Mongols had retreated with heavy losses.

The Single Combats of Jalal-u-Din.—Jalal-u-Din was now called upon to face a confederation of Georgians, Alans, Lesgians, and Kipchaks. He detached the last-named tribe by reminding them how he had saved the life of many of them during the reign of his father, and by way of a spectacle to both armies proposed to fight the champions of the Georgians. Having killed successively a noted warrior and his three sons, he was attacked by a huge giant. His horse was fatigued, but nothing daunted the gallant soldier leapt to the ground, disarmed his opponent and killed him. Truly an amazing feat! He then gave the signal, and his horsemen fell upon the army of the Georgians, which fled before them.

In A.H. 626 (1229) Jalal-u-Din made peace with the Caliph, who, in return for having his name restored in the public prayers, conferred on the monarch the title of Shah-in-Shah, while refusing that of Sultan.

His Escapes from the Mongols and his Death, A.H. 628 (1231).—The Mongol army under Chormaghun, the despatch of which has been already mentioned, found Jalal-u-Din unprepared. Indeed he was surprised in the Moghan plain where he was waiting for his army to assemble, and barely succeeded in escaping. After this his rôle was that of a fugitive, unable to meet the Mongol army, whose general was particularly anxious to effect his capture. He held Ganja for a time, and, after one more narrow escape from the Mongols, was killed by a Kurdish tribesman who was looking out for refugees to plunder.

Thus ended the brilliant career of one of the bravest and most enterprising soldiers who ever lived. Had Jalal-u-Din possessed the greater qualities of general or

statesman, he would surely have been able to organize a force capable of defeating the Mongols, and would thereby have prevented the sack of Baghdad. As it was, he is remembered in history as a dazzling meteor, perhaps a prototype of Charles XII. of Sweden.

The Mongol Campaigns in Asia Minor and Syria.—Chormaghun, realizing that Jalal-u-Din was not in a position to offer any organized resistance, ravaged Mesopotamia, Kurdistan, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia, and committed atrocities similar to those already described. Ibn-ul-Athir states that the panic which prevailed made the peasantry so cowardly that on one occasion a Mongol who wished to kill a man, but was unarmed, told him to lie down and await his return with a sword, and this the unnerved victim actually did. As will be seen later, in the eighteenth century the Afghans were able to treat the citizens of Isfahan in the same manner, they too being unable to move from fear.

The division commanded at first by Chormaghun, and afterwards by Baydu, ravaged the provinces to the west of Persia during the next twenty years, their cavalry raids extending as far as Aleppo, and we learn from Matthew Paris[1] that the Christian Prince of Antioch and other Christian lords paid them tribute.

The Kutlugh Khans of Kerman, A.H. 619-703 (1222–1303).—As mentioned in Chapter LIII., Fars and Luristan were governed by independent princes termed Atabeg, and escaped the Mongol terror by politic submission. We now turn to the remaining province of Kerman. Although like Fars its remoteness saved it from the Mongols, it had, as already related, been devastated again and again by the ferocious Ghuzz. The Ik or Shabancara tribe next gained possession of the province for a short time, but in A.H. 600 (1203) it was seized by an army from Fars. Shortly after the exhausted country had begun to recover under the ruler sent by the Atabeg of Fars, a new power appeared on the scene in the person of Khoja Razi-u-Din Zuzani with an army from Khiva which destroyed everything that the other armies had

[1] Pp. 876 and 937.

spared. Finally the Fars authorities withdrew their force, probably on account of their relation to the suzerain court of Khwarazm, and Razi-u-Din, after experiencing some vicissitudes of fortune, obtained possession of the province, which upon his death he bequeathed to his son Malik Shuja-u-Din.

Another new character now appeared at Kerman in the shape of a certain Borak Hajib,[1] once an official of the Kara Khitai dynasty, who had transferred his services to Khwarazm, and was proceeding to India accompanied by a number of Khwarazm Amirs, with the intention of joining Jalal-u-Din. Malik Shuja-u-Din attempted to rob the party, but was defeated and put to death. Borak Hajib, feeling that it would be foolish to neglect such an exceptional opportunity, seized the province with the aid of Jalal-u-Din and made good his position. He attempted the life of his sovereign, as already narrated, and subsequently captured and strangled Ghias-u-Din. With the present of his head this disloyal, but only too successful, adventurer won the favour of the Mongols, and Ogotay not only confirmed him in his rule, but conferred on him the title of Kutlugh Khan. The dynasty played no part outside the Kerman province and does not appear to call for further notice.[2]

Christian Missions to the Mongols, A.D. 1245–1253.—The invasion of the Mongols, and more especially the awful devastation wrought by them in Poland and Hungary, had excited much alarm and horror all over Europe, though not sufficient to cause a cessation of internal strife. When it appeared improbable that they would attempt to conquer Western Europe, the fear they inspired began to give place to the hope that they would shatter Islam, and rumours were also heard that there were Christian tribes among the new invaders.

The views of Christendom found expression at the Council of Lyons, held in 1245, which decided that two embassies should be despatched to the Great Khan. Only one of these reached its destination. At its head was

[1] *Hajib* signifies Chief Guardian or Chamberlain.
[2] In *Ten Thousand Miles, etc.*, pp. 60-62, I have dealt with this dynasty more fully.

John de Plano Carpini, a Franciscan, who made a wonderful journey by way of Batu's camp on the Volga to Karacoram, the capital founded by Ogotay. He arrived there in A.D. 1246, at an interesting time, as a Diet was being held for the election of Kuyuk to the throne rendered vacant by the death of his father, Ogotay.

Two of Kuyuk's ministers were Christians, and in consequence the Pope's ambassador had a friendly reception. Very different was the treatment accorded to the representatives of the Caliph and of the Assassins, who were dismissed with threats and menaces. To the Latin mission letters were given, and, ignoring a hint that they should be accompanied by Tartar envoys, they set out on their long return journey, which was successfully accomplished. John died shortly after his return, but the information he brought to Europe was of the utmost value.

The next mission to be despatched was placed under the Dominican Friar Anselm, who had instructions to seek out the nearest Tartar army and deliver a letter from the Pope exhorting the Mongols not to renew their ravages in Christian countries and to repent of their misdeeds. In 1247 this truly forlorn hope reached the camp of the General Baydu in Persia, and, as the friars brought no gifts and refused to do obeisance, they were treated with contempt "as dogs." Their letters, however, were translated first into Persian and then into Tartar and were read before Baydu. The monks were kept waiting for an answer by the incensed Mongol, who, it is said, thrice gave the order for their execution. But in the end they were dismissed with the reply of the General in the words of Chengiz: "Whoever will obey us, let him remain in possession of his land, of his water, and of his inheritance . . . but whoever resists, let him be annihilated." The Pope was summoned to come in person and offer his submission. These intrepid friars returned in safety to Rome after an absence of three and a half years.

We now come to the famous mission of William of Rubruquis, who was despatched by St. Louis and reached

Karacoram in 1253; by this date Kuyuk was dead and Mangu, son of Tuli, had been elected Khakan. Mangu accorded the envoy more than one audience, treated him kindly, and gave him letters for his master, but he was always half-drunk, and never committed himself to acknowledging the Christian religion, as had been hoped. Both John di Plano Carpini and William of Rubruquis were great travellers and keen observers, whose courage amidst constant danger and equally constant hunger deserves great admiration.

Yet another traveller who merits a place on the roll of fame is Hayton, king of Armenia, who reached the court of Mangu shortly after the departure of Rubruquis. He travelled by way of the camp of Batu and was received with much honour by the Khakan. On his return he traversed Transoxiana, crossed Northern Persia, and reached his kingdom after completing a great round journey, an account of which has fortunately been preserved to us.

The Administration of Northern Persia before Hulagu Khan.—When Chormaghun was despatched by Ogotay to attack Jalal-u-Din, the Mongol Governor of Khwarazm, Chintimur by name, was instructed to co-operate by occupying Khorasan. Many districts had previously escaped devastation, but all were now systematically spoiled. These proceedings were made difficult for some time by two officers of Jalal-u-Din who waged a guerilla warfare from the Nishapur Mountains, but they were finally defeated near Sabzawar after a battle lasting three days, in which the Mongols lost two thousand men.

Chintimur died in A.D. 1235 and was succeeded by Keurguez, his secretary. This very capable man set to work to organize the administration and to repress the terrible exactions under which the peasants groaned. Later on, after clearing himself from certain charges brought against him before the Khakan, he was given the governorship of all the provinces west of the Oxus and was able to rescue them from the cruel and impolitic rule of the officers of Chormaghun. He chose as his



From a photograph by the Author.

THE WALLS OF TUS.

residence Tus, in which only fifty inhabited houses had been left, and the Persian nobles at once bought up the land to build residences near him. Upon Ogotay's death his widow despatched Arghun to supersede and arrest this able official, who was put to death by having earth forced down his throat.

Under Arghun the taxes were at first levied with the utmost severity by Sharaf-u-Din, his Moslem interpreter, but after the death of the latter every effort was made to secure good administration, and Kuyuk, upon his succession, confirmed Arghun in his government. Mangu, too, approved of his administration, and in order to remedy abuses by which the princes of the blood secured orders on the revenue, it was decided that a fixed poll-tax should be paid and that nothing else should be exacted.

The Appointment of Hulagu Khan to Persia, A.H. 649 (1251).—Mangu was elected Khakan in A.D. 1251, and upon his accession two great expeditions were decided upon, one under his next brother, Khubilay, to China, and the other under a younger brother, Hulagu Khan, the founder of the dynasty of the Il-Khans, to Persia. Hulagu with a strong army and a powerful Chinese engineer and artillery corps started from Karacoram in A.D. 1252, with instructions to crush the Assassins and to extinguish the Caliphate. The Mongol prince moved even more leisurely than was usual and did not reach the borders of his command until three and a half years later. At Kesh he was met by Arghun, who was accompanied by the future historian, Ata Malik of Juwayn. This able Persian served Hulagu as secretary through the important campaign that followed and was thereby enabled to write a history from first-hand sources.

The Dynasty of the Assassins at its Zenith.—Reference has already twice been made to the Assassins, who were Hulagu's first objective, and before we come to the extirpation of this noxious sect some account of their later history is necessary. Hasan Sabbah lived to a green old age and, having put to death both his own sons, appointed his colleague Kiya Buzurg-Umid to succeed him. The importance of the sect increased under this man and

under his son Mohamed, who died in A.D. 1162, and was succeeded by his son, Hasan. This somewhat extraordinary man disowned his own parentage and proclaimed himself the descendant of the Fatimid Nizar. To further his ambitions he convened an assembly in A.H. 559 (1164) and not only proclaimed himself to be the Imam, but announced the abrogation of the letter of the law in favour of its allegorical meaning. It is stated that the term *Mulahida* or "heretics" was given to the sect owing to this new claim, and by this name they are still known in Khorasan. Hasan, after ruling for some years, was assassinated, but his son followed in his father's footsteps. In A.D. 1210 Jalal-u-Din succeeded to the inheritance, and, completely reversing the policy of the sect, declared himself an orthodox Moslem. He entered into friendly relations with the Caliph Nasir and with neighbouring Moslem princes and later on allied himself with the heroic Jalal-u-Din of Khiva; but he dreaded the power of Chengiz Khan, to whom he despatched an embassy. In A.D. 1220 he died suddenly, probably of poison. His successor and the last Grand Master was a boy of nine, by name Rukn-u-Din. In A.D. 1238 he despatched an embassy to Europe, and we read in Matthew Paris that it was treated coldly. An envoy visited the Court of Henry III. of England to plead the cause of the Ismailis, but the Bishop of Winchester probably expressed the public feeling in the words: "Let those dogs devour each other and be utterly wiped out and then we shall see, founded on their ruins, the universal Catholic Church."

The Extirpation of the Assassins, A.H. 654 (1256).—Hulagu was able to attack the Ismaili fortresses in detail, and as the Grand Master possessed practically no field army the sect was doomed. The storm broke first on Khaf and Tun, which were captured, the entire population being massacred except a few beautiful girls. Rukn-u-Din in a fit of profound discouragement surrendered many of his other fortresses, and finally his capital Alamut near Kazvin and his own person, to the Mongols, who thus eradicated the sect with the utmost ease. In Khorasan and also in the Kerman province a few hundred

of its followers still survive and are to some extent protected by the British officials.[1]

The Sack of Baghdad and the Execution of the Caliph, A.H. 656 (1258).—From Hamadan, which Hulagu had made his headquarters after crushing the Assassins, a summons was sent to the Caliph Mustasim Billah, and in the autumn of A.D. 1257, or more than a year after accomplishing his first task, the Mongol prince, after much hesitation and consultation of astrologers, marched westwards to attack Baghdad from the east in co-operation with Baydu. The latter was instructed to march from the north and attack from the west, the object evidently being to prevent the escape of the Caliph and his subjects. Mustasim Billah was an unworthy nullity, full of false pride. Instead of profiting by the delay granted him through Hulagu's love of ease and pleasure, he took no adequate steps to collect troops, and above all, utterly refused to unlock the doors of his treasure-house. Had he been a capable ruler, he could very probably have beaten off the Mongols, but the last of the Abbasid dynasty was a sorry degenerate.

The two Mongol armies aggregated about one hundred thousand men, whereas the Caliph, owing to his avarice and folly, could not muster more than one-fifth of that force. Resistance was offered at Takrit, where the bridge over the Tigris was destroyed, and again at Dujayal ; but the Mongols flooded the Moslem camp during the night, making the position impossible, and only a few fugitives escaped to Baghdad. The Mongols now advanced on the heart of Islam and took part of the walls by assault. Overtures were then made, and, like so many other deluded victims of Mongol treachery, the Caliph surrendered. According to the Moslem historians, he was done to death by being tied up in a sack and then trampled on by horses or beaten with clubs, and the story is not improbable, since to shed royal blood was contrary to the Mongol usage.

However, it is impossible to pass by the account

[1] In Chapter LXXVII. an account is given of the rebellion of Aga Khan, the leader of the Ismailis in the middle of the nineteenth century.

enshrined in Longfellow's "Kambalu,"[1] according to which Alau (as Hulagu is named) captured the Caliph, who headed a sally from Baghdad (termed Baldacca) and was caught in an ambush. The poem then proceeds :

As in at the gate we rode, behold,
A tower that is called the Tower of Gold !
For there the Kalif had hidden his wealth,
Heaped and hoarded and piled on high,
Like sacks of wheat in a granary ;
And thither the miser crept by stealth
To feel of the gold that gave him health,
And to gaze and gloat with his hungry eye
On jewels that gleamed like a glow-worm's spark,
Or the eyes of a panther in the dark.

I said to the Kalif : "Thou art old,
Thou hast no need of so much gold.
Thou shouldst not have heaped and hidden it here,
Till the breath of battle was hot and near,
But have sown through the land these useless hoards
To spring into shining blades of swords,
And keep thine honour sweet and clear.
These grains of gold are not grains of wheat ;
These bars of silver thou canst not eat ;
These jewels and pearls and precious stones
Cannot cure the aches in thy bones,
Nor keep the feet of Death one hour
From climbing the stairways of thy tower ! "

Then into his dungeon I locked the drone,
And left him to feed there all alone
In the honey-cells of his golden hive :
Never a prayer, nor a cry, nor a groan
Was heard from those massive walls of stone,
Nor again was the Kalif seen alive ![2]

The sack of Baghdad lasted for a week, during which nearly one million of its inhabitants were massacred. Writing forty-four years after the event, the author of the *Kitab-ul-Fakhri* refers to it in the following words : "Then there took place such wholesale slaughter and unrestrained looting and excessive torture and mutilation as it is hard to hear spoken of even generally ; how think

[1] Kambalu or Xanadu is Khan-baligh or Pekin.

[2] I wonder whether Marco Polo's account of Baghdad inspired Longfellow to write this poem.

174a



THE SIEGE OF BAGHDAD BY HULAGU KHAN.

(From MS. of Jami al-Tawarikh, *circa* A.D. 1315. Bibliothèque Nationale.)

(F. R. Martin's *Miniature Painting in Persia*. Bernard Quaritch, 1912.)

you, then, of its details? There happened things I like not to mention; therefore imagine what you will, but ask me not of the matter!" Equally poignant, though more formal, is the threnody which is quoted as a heading to this chapter.

The sack of Baghdad was a more terrible event in history than that of Merv or Herat, inasmuch as the city was the centre of the Moslem world; and the irreparable injury to its civilization by the extinction of the Caliphate more than six centuries after the foundation of Islam, by the destruction of priceless literary and artistic treasures, and by the massacre of learned men of all classes, defies description. Moslem civilization was at that period the shining light in the world, and it has never recovered from the deadly blow. The awful nature of the cataclysm which set back the hands of the clock of progress among Moslem states, and thereby indirectly throughout the world, is difficult to realize and impossible to exaggerate.

The Last Years of Hulagu Khan and his Death, A.H. 663 (1265).—Hulagu lived for seven years after the capture of Baghdad, by which his name is chiefly remembered. During this period he ruled as undisputed monarch of Iran. He furthermore captured Aleppo and carried all before him in Syria, until in 1260, after his departure, the Mongol army was defeated by the Mamelukes of Egypt. As Howorth points out, this defeat saved Egypt, the last refuge of Moslem culture.

Maragha in the north-west corner of modern Persia was chosen as his capital by the Mongol prince, and there, in the interests of astrology, in which he believed as foretelling the fate of princes, he built the famous observatory, the ruins of which are still visible.

During Hulagu's latter years there was a revolt in Fars, but the Atabeg Seljuk Shah was captured at Kazerun, the half-way town between Bushire and Shiraz, and his execution speedily followed. In Northern Persia peace reigned because the land lay desolate and only a timid remnant was left. So Hulagu died in peace and was buried in the island of Tala, in Lake Urumia, where he had collected the almost incredible wealth of the

Assassins and of the Caliphs. Shortly afterwards died Dokuz Khatun, his chief wife, who as a member of the Kerait tribe was a Nestorian Christian, and to whose influence it was due that Hulagu protected Christians. Indeed so far did this protection go that in A.D. 1260 Hulagu received a letter from the Pope expressing the Sovereign Pontiff's joy at hearing that he was disposed to adopt the Catholic faith.

Of the character of Hulagu little that is good is known. He was certainly as cruel and as false as others of his race, and he appears to have been addicted to pleasure. Had he found a strong Caliph ruling at Baghdad, it seems probable that his hordes, lacking a leader, would have been beaten back; but he was fortunate in having to deal with weak and incapable men both at Alamut and at Baghdad, and it is mainly owing to this personal accident that Hulagu Khan, the founder of a dynasty in Persia, is known to fame as a conqueror who profoundly affected the course of the world's history.



ARGHUN.

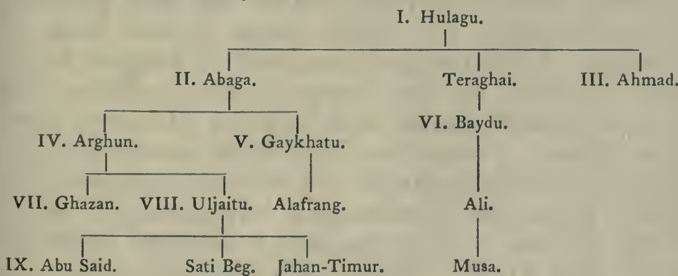
CHAPTER LVII

THE HEATHEN IL-KHANS OF PERSIA

Brother David has arrived at our Court and presented letters sent through your envoys to the Holy Father and other Christian Kings. We note in them the love you bear to the Christian faith, and the resolution you have taken to relieve the Christians and the Holy Land from the enemies of Christianity. We pray Your Magnificence to carry out this holy project. We cannot at this time send you any certain news about the time of our arrival in the Holy Land, and of the march of the Christians, since at this moment nothing has been settled by the Sovereign Pontiff.—*Answer of Edward I. of England to Abaga, dated 26th January* 1274 (? 1275).

Abaga, A.H. 663–680 (1265–1281).—Abaga Khan,[1] the eldest son of Hulagu, was elected to succeed his father with ceremonies similar to those observed in the case of the Khakan, but he did not assume the full state of royalty until his election had received confirmation from Khubilay. One of his earliest acts was to marry a natural daughter of the Emperor Michael Paleologus, by name Mary, who, despatched as a bride to Hulagu, after hearing of his death continued her journey to the Mongol

[1] To make the relationship between the various Il-Khans clear, I append a table taken from *The Mohamedan Dynasties.*



Court. She is generally known as Despina or "Princess." This alliance was a distinct sign of the times.

The Invasion from Russia, A.H. 664 (1266).—Soon after his accession the territories of Abaga were invaded by the Mongols of Russia. There was a desperately contested battle in the valley of the Kur, but the invaders ultimately retreated, and Abaga, in order to protect the northern entrance to his empire, dug beyond the Kur a great ditch which he fortified and garrisoned.

Hayton, King of Armenia and Baybars of Egypt, A.H. 664–665 (1266–1267).—Abaga also adopted a defensive policy in the west, and afforded practically no help to Hayton, the King of Armenia, who was left to make his own terms with Baybars, the Bahri Mameluke. The latter, after gaining successes over the Crusaders, from whom he captured Caesarea and other cities, invaded Cilicia, defeated an Armenian army, and captured the Armenian heir-apparent. Peace was made in the end by the surrender of various cities, to which Abaga took no exception, as all his resources were required to meet an invasion from the East.

The Invasion of Khorasan by Borak, A.H. 668 (1270).—In A.D. 1265 Khubilay had given Transoxiana to Borak, the grandson of Chagatay, on condition that he attacked Kaydu, the grandson of Ogotay, who refused to recognize him as Khakan. Four years later these two princes made peace, and it was decided that Borak should be supported by Kaydu in an invasion of Khorasan. The troops of Borak advanced as far as Nishapur, which they plundered without serious opposition. But Abaga meanwhile was preparing for the campaign and he was soon marching eastwards along the trunk route which leads to Khorasan. Upon reaching the district of Badghiz, to the north of Herat, he sent envoys to Borak offering him the provinces of Ghazna and Kerman; but these terms were refused. Abaga then by a clever ruse deluded the enemy into thinking that he had returned precipitately to defend his western frontiers, his object being to secure a decisive issue to the campaign. A desperate battle was fought near Herat. Abaga's left wing was broken and

fled, but his right wing and centre bore down on the Chagatay Mongols and put them to flight. Borak fell from his horse and was nearly captured, but reached Bokhara in safety, and there became a convert to Islam. He then collected a force to punish those leaders who had deserted him, but he never recovered from the fall on the battle-field and died a few months after his defeat.

Yusuf Shah I., Atabeg of Luristan.—Abaga did not follow up his victory, but returned immediately to Azerbaijan. While travelling in the neighbourhood of Kazvin he was suddenly attacked by a body of Daylamites. The Atabeg of Luristan, Yusuf Shah I., who had materially contributed to the defeat of Borak, promptly fell on the assailants and saved the life of his suzerain, who to mark his gratitude added Khuzistan and three frontier districts of Luristan to the Atabeg's princedom.

The Devastation of Khwarazm and Transoxiana by Abaga, A.H. 671 (1272).—After the death of Borak and the disturbances which ensued, Abaga despatched a force to ravage Khwarazm and Transoxiana, on the advice of his Vizier, who suggested this as an effectual method of protecting Khorasan. The cities of Central Asia which had begun to recover from the Mongol cataclysm were once more ruined, and as Chuba and Kayan, the two sons of Algu, sacked Bokhara three years later, that unfortunate city lay desolate for seven years.

The Battle of Abulistin, A.H. 675 (1277).—To return to the west, the successful campaigns of Baybars at length compelled Abaga, much against his will, to send a Mongol army to defend his western provinces. Baybars, marching with his entire forces to invade Asia Minor, advanced from Aleppo northwards and found the Mongol army eleven thousand strong, supported by a body of Turks and a Georgian contingent, at Abulistin. The battle opened by a charge of the Mongol left wing on the Egyptian centre, which was forced back on to the right wing, while at the same time the Egyptian left wing was thrown into disorder. Baybars then ordered a charge by the whole line. The Mongols dismounted and poured in a storm of their deadly arrows, but the Moslems,

exclaiming that it was a Holy War ensuring Paradise, swept them off the field, with a loss of more than half their numbers.

After making a triumphal entry into Caesarea, Baybars, finding that the princes of Asia Minor dared not join him from fear of Abaga, retired to Damascus, where he died. Abaga, too late to retrieve the disaster, marched through Asia Minor, inflicting punishment on those who had failed in their duty with merciless severity, and upon his return to Persia sacrificed the Governor of Asia Minor to the resentment of the widows of his defeated soldiers.

The Battle of Hims, A.H. 680 (1281).—Burning to avenge the disaster of Abulistin, Abaga took advantage of a revolution in Egypt to invade Syria, and a great battle was fought near Hims, in the vicinity of the tomb of Khalid, the famous Moslem general. As at Abulistin, the battle began with a charge of the Mongol left wing, which, however, was repulsed. The Egyptians in turn charged and routed the Mongol left, but as an offset to this success their own left was broken by the right Mongol wing, which pursued it to the gates of Hims. There the Mongols occupied themselves with looting while awaiting the main body, whose success they never questioned. But meanwhile the Mongol centre, under Mangu-Timur, the brother of Abaga, had broken and fled, and consequently the Egyptians remained masters of the field; in the pursuit which ensued the Mongol losses were heavy.[1] This was the last expedition undertaken by Abaga, who died in the following year.

The Intercourse of Abaga with Europe.—Christendom, represented by the Pope, had, as already mentioned, made friendly overtures to the Mongols, whose protection of Christians had become known. At this period quite a correspondence ensued with Abaga, much of which has been preserved. Among the letters, that written by Edward I. of England is of special interest, and is given as a heading to this chapter. In pursuance of his policy,

[1] An interesting contemporary account of this battle, which makes the Mongol defeat seem less severe, is found in a letter from Joseph de Cancy, a Knight Hospitaller, to King Edward I. of England. A translation of this document and of the reply to it is given in Howorth's *op. cit.* vol. iii. p. 763 ff.

the Pope in A.D. 1278 despatched a Franciscan Mission to Abaga and also to the Khakan, but it is believed that, although some measure of success rewarded their efforts in Persia, the Mission did not penetrate farther east.

The Moslems were undoubtedly enemies both of the Mongols and of Christendom, and, as Hayton of Armenia and the Georgians were faithful allies to their suzerain, one at least of whose wives was a Christian, there is little doubt that the intercourse was prompted by a genuine desire to secure co-operation against the powers of Islam.

The Journey of Marco Polo in Persia, A.D. 1271.—One result, perhaps the only good one, of the Mongol conquests was that when the descendants of the conquerors, growing more civilized, became anxious to repair the devastation wrought by their terrible ancestors, almost the whole of Asia was opened to the traveller. We have examples in Carpini and Rubruquis of missions reaching Karacoram from distant countries in Asia and from Europe, and these missions must in every case have added considerably to mutual knowledge. In their wake followed the merchant-adventurers, greatest of whom was the illustrious Marco Polo,[1] justly named "The Father of Geography." It is of special interest to note that the three great geographers of early days, namely, Herodotus who lived in the fifth century B.C., Chang Kien who lived in the second century B.C., and Marco Polo who lived in the thirteenth century of our era, all described Persia, the Highway of the Nations. Apart from any comparisons which may be instituted, the actual value of the information given is considerable, and in the case of the two European travellers enables us to present a vivid picture of the country.

Marco Polo started on his famous journey across Asia to China from Lajazzo on the Gulf of Scanderun and entered Persia at or near Tabriz, where a Venetian colony

[1] The classic which deals with this subject is Yule's *Travels of Marco Polo*, one of the most fascinating works ever written. A third edition has been edited by Cordier, who is an authority on China, but not on Persia. In *Ten Thousand Miles, etc.*, chap. xxiii. is devoted to the travels of Marco Polo in Persia, and in the *Journal R.G.S.* vol. xxvi. (1905), p. 462, I have discussed the question as to whether he visited Baghdad, as Yule and Cordier believed. My opinion that he did not is supported by Beazley in his *op. cit.* vol. iii. p. 49 ff. Marco Polo actually travelled with his father and uncle.

had been established some years before. He states that its inhabitants "get their living by trade and handicrafts, for they weave many kinds of beautiful and valuable stuffs of silk and gold. The city has such a good position that merchandize is brought thither from India, Baudas (Baghdad) and Cremesor (the *Garmsir* or 'Hot Country') and many other regions, and that attracts many Latin merchants, especially Genoese, to buy goods and transact other business there." Marco Polo incorrectly describes Tabriz as being in the province of Irak, and equally incorrectly supposes it to be outside Persia. "Persia," he says, "is a great country which was in old times very illustrious and powerful; but now the Tartars have wasted and destroyed it." The next city mentioned is Saba, now Sava, from which, owing to the resemblance of its name to Sheba, the three Magi were supposed to have set out to worship the new-born Saviour.[1]

Marco Polo, believing that he had entered Persia at Sava, describes the country as divided into eight kingdoms, a wholly inaccurate division, which does not call for further notice. He refers to the fine horses and the "finest asses in the world," and goes on to say, "In the cities there are traders and artisans who live by their labour and crafts, weaving cloths of gold, and silk stuffs of sundry kinds. They have plenty of cotton produced in the country; and abundance of wheat, barley, millet, panick, and wine, with fruits of all kinds."

From Saba the Venetian visited Kashan, still famous for its velvets and silks, and from this important commercial centre he marched south-east to Yezd. From Yezd to Kerman there are two routes, by both of which I have travelled, and I have identified the more easterly of the two, *via* Bafk, as that traversed by the Venetian and his companions. Not only are there date palms to-day at Bafk, as mentioned by Marco Polo, but the altitude of the alternative route is too high for dates to grow there. Kerman, which was twice or even three times visited, is described at greater length than any other city

[1] Isaiah lx. 6 runs, "The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall show forth the praises of the Lord."



Flandin and Coste.

TABRIZ.

182a

in Persia. Mention is made of its turquoises and steel, which are not worked to-day. But the "exquisite needlework in the embroidery of silk stuffs in different colours, with figures of beasts and birds, trees and flowers, and a variety of other patterns," is still to be bought, modern Kerman being noted for its embroidered shawls.

From Kerman to Camadi in the Jiruft valley Yule was unable to identify the road followed by the Venetian, the entire district having been a blank on the map until in 1895 I discovered Marco's route, which ran across the elevated uplands of Sardu to the Sarbizan Pass, and thence descended rapidly through Dilfard to the ancient city of Jiruft. Marco gives an accurate description of this section in these words : "When you have ridden these seven days over a plain country, you come to a great mountain; and when you have got to the top of the pass, you find a great descent which occupies some two days to go down. . . . After you have ridden downhill those two days, you find yourself in a vast plain, and at the beginning thereof there is a city called Camadi, which formerly was a great and noble place, but now is of little consequence." In descending this valley his party was attacked by robbers and barely escaped. He then crossed the low ranges and emerged on to the plain and port of Hormuz or Ormuz (referred to in Chapter LXIV.), where "Merchants came from India with ships loaded with spicery and precious stones, pearls, cloths of silk and gold, elephants' teeth, and many other wares, which they sell to the merchants of Hormuz." For some reason, either because of the unseaworthy ships, "wretched affairs" as Marco terms them, or owing to a breakdown in health, the traveller returned by another road, through either Sirjan or Urzu, to Kerman, but the data given are scanty.

From Kerman Marco marched north to Cobinan, which still retains its name as Kubanan. There he was on the southern edge of the Lut, and I will again quote : "When you depart from this city of Cobinan, you find yourself again in a Desert of surpassing aridity, which lasts for some eight days ; here are neither fruits nor trees to be seen, and what water there is is bitter and

bad, so that you have to carry both food and water. . . . At the end of those eight days you arrive at a Province which is called Tonocain." The word Tonocain is obviously Tun va Kain, but the place on the map directly to the north is Tabas, and it seemed reasonable to suppose that the Venetian made for it. However, my inquiries at that town in 1905 showed that there was no caravan route from Kubanan, and that all caravans travelled *via* Chah Kuru to Naiband and Tun.[1] Consequently, although it would be unwise to be dogmatic, I favour the identification of this latter route, by which I traversed the Lut from north to south in 1893.

After stating that Tonocain "has a good many towns and villages," Marco describes the oriental plane or Arbre Sol, "which we Christians term *Arbre Sec*." I have made special reference to the treelessness of Persia, and it is on this account that trees growing without irrigation water are regarded as sacred. The custom is to make a vow at such a tree that, if one's wish be fulfilled, a sheep will be brought and sacrificed beneath it; in token of the vow a strip of the clothing is torn off and tied to the tree, which thus presents a curious appearance.

Tun was in the province of Kuhistan, and it has been mentioned in the previous chapter as having been sacked by the generals of Hulagu Khan at the opening of the campaign against the Ismailis. It is probably on this account that, after a reference to its "surpassingly beautiful women," Marco gives the account of the "Old Man of the Mountain," which has been quoted in Chapter LII. Possibly owing to a lacuna in the manuscript, no details are given of the illustrious Venetian's onward journey, which probably ran by Nishapur and Sarakhs, and the next place mentioned is Sapurgan or Shibrkan, in Afghan Turkestan. In any case Marco had now passed beyond the limits of modern Iran, and for the time being we may bid him farewell.

Ahmad, A.H. 680–683 (1281–1284).—The death of Abaga gave rise to many intrigues, and ultimately Tagudar Oghlu, a brother of the deceased monarch, was elected to

[1] *Journal R.G.S.* vol. xxvi. (1905).

succeed to the throne, Arghun, the eldest son of Abaga, being passed over. Tagudar, who had been baptized a Christian under the name of Nicolas, proclaimed himself a Moslem under the name of Ahmad upon his accession, and despatched an embassy to Kalaun of Egypt to announce the fact and to make profession of his friendly intentions. These were reciprocated by the Mameluke sovereign, who, however, forced the Mongol ambassadors to travel at night, and was careful not to allow them to have any contact with his subjects.

Arghun, being dissatisfied with the results of the election, rebelled, and being defeated took refuge in the natural fortress of Kalat-i-Nadiri, where the entrance towards the west is still known as Darband-i-Arghun, or Argawan. He was, however, induced to submit to his uncle, who received him kindly but kept him in confinement. Meanwhile a strong party in the army, which resented Ahmad's conversion to Islam and the favour shown to Moslems, conspired to rescue the young Prince. The army declared for the latter and Ahmad fled, but was captured and killed by having his back broken.

The Reign of Arghun, A.H. 683–690 (1284–1291).—The reign of Arghun was not eventful, and for some years there was nothing worthy of record except a conspiracy formed by Boukai, who had been instrumental in rescuing him from his uncle's hands and had been given almost supreme power. This plot was revealed, and Boukai and his family with the other conspirators were put to death. The execution caused a rebellion in Khorasan, which was the appanage of Ghazan, son of Arghun, and Ghazan's general rebelled from fear of being put to death as a friend of the late conspirator. He attacked Ghazan, who was encamped on the banks of the Kashaf Rud, the river of Tus and of Meshed, but the Prince succeeded in escaping, only, however, to be defeated later on near Tus. Ghazan rallied his forces at Kalposh near Nardin, and having received strong reinforcements, was able to drive the rebel general out of Persia.

Arghun during his short reign evinced much favour towards Christians, and made proposals in 1289, and again

two years later, to the powers of Christendom for a joint attack on the Moslems in the Holy Land; but the fall of Acre in 1291 sealed the fate of European domination in Syria, which, after two centuries of vicissitude, ceased to exist. As in the case of his predecessor, letters were exchanged, hopes were excited, and little was actually done.

John de Monte Corvino.—The leading missionary of the age was John de Monte Corvino, a Franciscan friar who was working in the Levant at this period, and who reported to the Pope his high hopes of the conversion of Arghun. Consequently he was despatched with many letters, and, passing through Tabriz, proceeded to distant China, where he founded a flourishing church.

Gaykhatu, A.H. 690–694 (1291–1295), *and Baydu*, A.H. 694 (1295).—Upon the death of Arghun the generals who had usurped the power sent envoys to Ghazan his son, to Gaykhatu his brother, and to Baydu his cousin. Their first decision was to offer the succession to Gaykhatu. A few days later, however, they regretted their choice and decided to raise Baydu to the throne, but being prudent he declined the offer and Gaykhatu was thereupon elected. He was lavish in his expenditure, and when the treasury was empty he attempted, in imitation of Khubilay, to issue bank-notes; but the measure was so unpopular that it was speedily cancelled.

The folly of Gaykhatu and his unbridled excesses of every description alienated the Mongol generals, and when Baydu, who had been struck and insulted by his cousin, rebelled, the unhappy monarch was deserted with sinister suddenness and strangled. Nor was Baydu, his successor, more fortunate, as he held the throne for less than a year and was in turn deserted by his generals in favour of Ghazan, by whose orders he was put to death. With Baydu ended the period of the heathen Il-Khans. It is specially noteworthy that, whereas only twelve years before Ahmad had lost his throne partly, at any rate, owing to his zeal for Islam, the deposition and death of Baydu were due mainly to his hostility to that religion and to his predilection for Christianity.

The Return of Marco Polo to Persia, A.D. 1294.—Arghun had despatched an embassy to Khubilay to ask for the hand of a Princess of the Royal House, and in A.D. 1292 Marco Polo was entrusted with the perilous duty of escorting the lady Kokachin "moult bele dame et avenant" from China to Persia. Khubilay, upon dismissing the Venetian, gave him "two golden Tablets of Authority. He charged him also with messages to the King of France, the King of England, the King of Spain, and the other Kings of Christendom."

The land route being rejected as too fatiguing, the intrepid Venetian sailed from China with a well-equipped squadron of thirteen ships and a large retinue; but during the two years which the voyage occupied almost every one died, "so that only eight survived." Upon reaching Hormuz, in A.D. 1294, Marco heard of the death of Arghun, and, having reported his arrival to Gaykhatu, was instructed to take the Princess to Ghazan Khan, who was at this time in Kuhistan. It is therefore probable that he followed the same route as he originally took from Hormuz to Tun, and from the camp of Ghazan to Tabriz he presumably followed the trunk route which skirts the Elburz. At the capital he was treated with great distinction; and his epoch-making journey, or series of journeys, was brought to a happy conclusion in A.D. 1295 or the following year, when, after an absence of a quarter of a century, the way-weary Venetian reached his home.



GHAZAN.

CHAPTER LVIII

GHAZAN KHAN, THE GREAT IL-KHAN

That which was most admirable was that in such a small body more fine qualities existed than could be imagined. Among his soldiers scarcely one could be found as small and as ugly in face as he was, but yet he surpassed them all in virtue and integrity.—*Hayton of Armenia on Ghazan Khan.*

The Accession of Ghazan, A.H. 694 (1295).—Ghazan upon his accession proclaimed himself a Moslem and on this account repudiated the suzerainty of the Khakans, who were, of course, heathen. To mark this step, which was, in fact, the opening of a new period, he substituted the Moslem confession of faith on his coins for the name and titles of the Khakan. Furthermore, with the zeal of a convert, he destroyed Christian, Jewish, and pagan temples alike, until the King of Armenia interceded with him, after which he demolished only the temples of the pagans.

The earlier part of his short reign of nine years was filled with rebellions and disturbances, the invasion of Khorasan from Transoxiana falling into the latter category. The two chief supporters of Ghazan were Togatchar and Noruz, but he suspected their loyalty and determined to put them to death. The execution of the former was accomplished by treachery. Noruz, on the other hand, escaped and took refuge with Fakhr-u-Din, the Kart ruler of Herat; but he was surrendered to the representative of Ghazan and immediately executed. Many other chiefs and officials were put to death during this reign.

His First Syrian Campaign, A.H. 699 (1299).—After successfully putting down these rebellions, which the fate of recent Il-Khans had encouraged, Ghazan took advantage of the weakness of the Mameluke empire, which was suffering from internal troubles, and invaded Syria. He crossed the Euphrates with an army ninety thousand strong and moved on Aleppo ; instead of besieging it, however, he marched to meet the Egyptian army. The decisive battle was fought at Hims, where formerly the Mongol arms had met with disaster. On this occasion the centre under Ghazan was nearly broken by the charge of the heavily armed Mamelukes, but the Il-Khan dismounted his men, who used their horses as a rampart from behind which they kept up a heavy fire of arrows. These tactics threw the Mamelukes into disorder owing to the numbers of their horses that were killed, and when the Mongol wings had repulsed the Egyptians by the same device, a general advance, headed by the deadly archers on foot, completed the victory.

The change that Islam had made in the customs of the Mongols is clearly seen by Ghazan's treatment of Damascus. He received the submission of the city and issued a proclamation with many quotations from the Koran, to the effect that he had come to deliver Syria from a reprobate monarch and that no harm would be done to any one. Moreover, he kept the soldiery out of the city and did not even allow the gardens for which the place is famous to be damaged. Nevertheless, in spite of Ghazan's humane intentions, Damascus did not escape severe suffering, owing mainly to the hatred of the Il-Khan's Armenian allies and the difficulty of restraining troops accustomed to plunder. After remaining until the contribution fixed by him had been fully paid, Ghazan marched back across the Euphrates, leaving a force to hold his conquests ; but on the organization of a fresh army at Cairo the Mongols retreated, and Syria reverted to its Egyptian masters.

The Raiding of Southern Persia from Transoxiana.—During the absence of Ghazan in Syria, Kutlugh Shah, the Chagatay Prince of Transoxiana, sent a force of ten

thousand men to raid Southern Persia. The province of Kerman lay desolate, as Mahmud Shah, its drunken prince, had revolted and the troops of Ghazan had been quartered on it for a year; indeed, so depopulated was the country that only one thousand Afghans were met with, who were attacked and robbed of their families and possessions. At Shiraz there was no garrison to defend the city, but the inhabitants armed themselves, and for once the well-worn ruse of an ambuscade failed to lure them from the security of their walls. Consequently no attack was attempted on the capital of Fars, and the raiders, plunging into the "Hot Country" at Kazerun, looted the nomads of the province, and entered Khuzistan. The force finally assembled at Hormuz in Khuzistan for the return march, but being encumbered with thousands of animals they suffered severe losses, and were obliged to leave behind all their booty.

The Defeat of the Mongols in Syria, A.H. 702 (1303).—In A.H. 700 (1301) Ghazan made a second incursion into Syria, but was foiled by the bad weather and retired after sustaining heavy losses in his transport. Two years later he once again crossed the Euphrates, but on this occasion, after securing a minor success, he retired to watch events from the left bank of the Tigris. Kutlugh Shah, who commanded his army fifty thousand strong, met the Egyptian army in the vicinity of Damascus. This battle also was chequered, the right wing of the Egyptians giving way and causing a panic in Damascus, while the left wing stood firm, and compelled the invaders to retire to the hills for the night. In the morning the battle was renewed, with the result that the Mongols, who were suffering from lack of water, attempted to break through and flee, and being permitted to do so were followed up and cut to pieces.

The Relations of Ghazan with Byzantium and the Western Powers.—In A.H. 702 (1302) Ghazan received an embassy from Andronicus the Elder, who offered him the hand of a Greek princess and begged that the Turks of Asia Minor might be ordered to cease their raids into his territories. Little did the Emperor realize that these



From a photograph by Athelstan Riley.

A BRIDGE OVER THE ZAB.

same Turks, whose rise dates from this period, were destined to capture Byzantium and to hold in subjection provinces of Europe.

With the Western states of Europe Ghazan maintained the friendly relations which he had inherited, and letters similar in tenor to those already mentioned are preserved in the archives of various powers. The fact that Egypt, the representative Moslem power, was his chief enemy, strengthened the belief that at heart he was a Christian, or, at any rate, had Christian sympathies. During his reign Edward I. of England accredited Geoffrey de Langley, who was accompanied by two esquires, to the Persian Court. The original roll of their itinerary is extant,[1] and also an account of their expenditure, which included purchases of silver plate, fur pelisses, and carpets. They travelled by way of Genoa to Trebizond and Tabriz, and returned home with a leopard in a cage. No other account of their mission has been preserved.

His Reforms.—When Ghazan Khan came to the throne, he found the revenue so corruptly administered that practically nothing reached the central government, with the result that he was unable to give pay, much less presents, to his army. At the same time the peasantry were so ground down by illegal and semi-illegal exactions that they were deserting their villages, and whenever an official appeared they took refuge in underground hiding-places. To remove this fundamental abuse a survey of all property was instituted, and on this a new system of taxation was based, each village paying its taxes in two instalments and knowing exactly what the amount was. All assignations on revenue—a cause of endless corruption—and all other irregular taxes or tolls were forbidden on pain of death, and in order to prevent the tax-collectors from deceiving the peasantry each village was obliged to post a copy of the order, with details of its taxes, outside the mosque. Another abuse was that all government officials and other great personages not only used the government post-horses but preyed on the country, quartering themselves and their large suites in the towns

[1] *Archaeological Journal*, vol. viii. pp. 49-50.

and villages, and taking everything they and their servants desired without payment. It had also become customary to send an enormous number of couriers to and from the court, all of whom seized supplies and even transport when necessary, with the result that the population had disappeared from the vicinity of the main roads. This abuse Ghazan remedied, in the first place by instituting a private postal service of horses, which was not allowed to be used by any one except the monarch's special couriers. He subsequently abolished the old service, and by rigorously suppressing the use of couriers and by other means put an end to the extortions. He also purified and organized the administration of justice, encouraged agriculture, founded military fiefs, set up a standard of weights and measures, and worked by every means for the prosperity of the down-trodden peasantry.

His Buildings and Endowments.—His capital, Tabriz, Ghazan adorned with buildings which surpassed in splendour the famous tomb of Sultan Sanjar at Merv. Building on the same lines, he erected a magnificent mausoleum, together with an equally magnificent mosque, two colleges, a hospital, a library, and an observatory. The most celebrated professors and scientific men of the age were appointed with liberal salaries to staff these foundations, and lands were assigned to them in perpetuity, the produce of which provided the salaries and upkeep. Nor were the students forgotten; indeed the entire scheme was thought out with extraordinary thoroughness, and it is to be regretted that a man of such administrative genius was shortly afterwards succeeded by puppet-khans under whom Persia relapsed into anarchy.

Uljaitu, A.H. 703–716 (1304–1316).—The successor of the great Il-Khan was his brother Mohamed Khudabanda, generally known by his title of Uljaitu.[1] Upon hearing of the death of Ghazan he kept the intelligence

[1] *Uljaitu* signifies "Fortunate." The Sultan was born when his mother was traversing the desert which lies between Merv and Sarakhs. Her attendants, being obliged to halt, were afraid that the party would die of thirst, but upon the birth of the infant a heavy shower fell, and it was in commemoration of this that he received his title.

a secret until he had surprised and killed a possible competitor for the throne in the person of Alafrang, son of Gaykhatu, together with his supporters. The third son of Arghun Khan, he had been brought up by his mother as a Christian and baptized under the name of Nicolas, but through the influence of his wife he had been converted to Islam. He loved to listen to religious discussions, and was once shocked by hearing it stated that Islam allowed marriage with a mother, a sister, or a daughter. His adverse impression was strengthened by a violent thunderstorm during which some members of his court were killed and which was interpreted as a sign that heaven was angry at his adoption of Islam. For a while the Sultan thought of returning to the old Mongol beliefs, but, visiting the tomb of Ali, he there dreamed a dream as a result of which he finally embraced the Shia tenets.

Among other events of this reign was an invasion of Gilan, hitherto independent, which cost the Mongols thousands of lives ; there was also a raid into Khorasan by the Chagatay Mongols, which was beaten off. Uljaitu, like his predecessors, corresponded with the sovereigns of Western Europe, and it is interesting to note that they believed him to be an enemy of Islam.[1]

Abu Said, A.H. 716–736 (1316–1335).—Abu Said, the son of Khudabanda, was only a boy of twelve when he succeeded to the throne, although he had been the nominal ruler of Khorasan, which to some extent had become the appanage of the heir-apparent. His reign was marked by disputes of the great nobles, who during his minority contended for power. Chief among them was Amir Chupan, the Regent, who was married to a sister of the monarch and whose power overshadowed the throne. The revolt of his son, whom he captured and brought a prisoner to Sultania (the city founded by Khudabanda), only strengthened his position, which he might have retained but for the fact that Abu Said fell in love with his daughter, Baghdad *Khatun*,[2] whom he

[1] This appears from a letter of Edward II., dated Northampton, October 16, 1307, in which the monarch states that the English King would employ all his efforts "to extirpate the abominable sect of Mohamed."

[2] *Khatun* signifies "lady."

had married to a Mongol noble. His refusal to hand over his daughter weighed on the mind of the enamoured monarch, who began to hate Chupan so intensely that in self-defence the Amir was forced to rebel, and paid the penalty with his life. Nothing more during this reign merits notice, and Abu Said, dying childless, left the kingdom a prey to disorder.

The Puppet Il-Khans.—The remaining Il-Khans were puppets set up by rival generals, and their importance was so small that they may suitably be relegated to a list taken from *The Mohamedan Dynasties*.

Arpa		A.H. 736	(1335).
Musa		736	(1336).

RIVAL KHANS

Puppets of the Jalayr Amir	Mohamed	736–8	(1336–8).
	Tugha-Timur	739–52	(1338–51).
	Jahan-Timur	739–41	(1339–41).
Puppets of the Chupani Amirs	Sati-Beg (princess)	739–40	(1339).
	Sulayman	740–4	(1339–43).
	Noshirwan	745	(1344).

The Jalayr Dynasty, A.H. 736–814 (1336–1411).—In the struggle for power which occurred upon the disintegration of the Empire of the Il-Khans the most important family was that of Amir Husayn Jalayr, known also as the Ilkhanian. Under Shaykh Hasan Buzurg, or "the Great," who had set up three puppets given in the list above, and had subsequently assumed sovereign functions himself, Irak was taken possession of and Baghdad once again became a capital. His son Oways, on his succession in A.H. 757 (1356), seized Azerbaijan, which had been annexed by the Golden Horde, and a few years later added Mosul and Diarbekr to the newly founded kingdom. Oways was succeeded by Husayn, who fought the Muzaffar dynasty of Southern Persia and the Kara Kuyunlu, or "Black Sheep" Turkoman, to the west. Upon his death in A.H. 784 (1382), he bequeathed Azerbaijan and Irak to Sultan Ahmad, on whom fell the brunt of the invasion of Timur. Unable to resist the

194a



From a photograph by H. R. Sykes.

STONE PULPIT AT SIRJAN.

(With date A.H. 789 (1387).)

World Conqueror he fled to Egypt and spent the rest of his life in seeking to regain and hold his dominions. In A.H. 813 (1410) he had recovered Baghdad, but when invading Azerbaijan he was defeated by the Kara Kuyunlu, who succeeded this undistinguished dynasty.

The Muzaffarids, A.H. 713–795 (1313–1393).—The founder of the Southern Persian dynasty was a certain Amir Muzaffar, who was appointed Governor of Maybud, a small town to the north-west of Yezd. His son in A.H. 713 (1313) was appointed Governor of Yezd and Fars by Abu Said, and so increased his influence by marrying Kutlugh Turkan, the only daughter of Shah Jahan of the Kutlugh Khans of Kerman, that in A.H. 741 (1340) he obtained possession of that province. In A.H. 754 (1353), after a series of campaigns fought with Abu Ishak, Inju, he annexed Fars, and three years later Isfahan. Finding the conditions favourable, this successful warrior led his army to Tabriz, but when he was apparently at the zenith of his fame his sons conspired against him and blinded him. His successors quarrelled among themselves and merit little notice, except that Shah Shuja is known to fame as the patron of Hafiz. Sultan Ahmad, the Imad-u-Din, is well known at Kerman as the founder of the Pa Minar mosque. In his honour, too, was carved the beautiful stone pulpit which I discovered at Kala-i-Sang, the old capital of the province. The family submitted to Tamerlane, but rebelled, and in a desperate charge Shah Mansur nearly succeeded in killing the Great Conqueror himself, as will be seen in the following chapter. On this account the dynasty was exterminated.[1]

The Karts of Herat, A.H. 643–791 (1245–1389).—To complete the survey of petty dynasties mention must be made of the Kart race of Ghor, which held Herat under the Mongols from the middle of the thirteenth century of our era. As mentioned above, Fakhr-u-Din gained the favour of Ghazan by handing over Noruz, and the dynasty, partly owing to the possession of an inaccessible fort, maintained itself until a few years after the conquest of Herat by Timur in A.H. 783 (1381).

[1] This dynasty is dealt with at greater length in *Ten Thousand Miles, etc.*, p. 63.



TAMERLANE.

CHAPTER LIX

TAMERLANE

And when I cloathed myself in the robe of empire, I shut my eyes to safety, and to the repose which is found on the bed of ease. And from the twelfth year of my age I travelled over countries, and combated difficulties, and formed enterprises and vanquished armies, and I hazarded my person in the hour of danger; until in the end I vanquished kingdoms and empires, and established the glory of my name.—From *The Institutes of Timur*.

Transoxiana in the Middle of the Fourteenth Century.—The house of Chagatay which ruled Central Asia[1] was the least distinguished of the dynasties founded by Chengiz Khan. In the period covered by the preceding chapter an occasional raid into Khorasan constituted all its history so far as Persia was concerned, and during much of the time Transoxiana was in a state of anarchy. In A.H. 746 (1345) Kazan Khan, the Western Chagatay ruler, provoked a rebellion by his cruelty, the nobles uniting under a certain Amir Kazghan to dethrone him, a design in which they were successful the following year. Amir Kazghan after this revolution ruled through puppet Khans until his death in A.H. 759 (1357) and was succeeded by his son Abdulla. Sarai was deserted through the influence of Sali, the new Vizier, and Samarcand again became the capital of an empire. Becoming enamoured of the wife of the puppet Khan, Abdulla put him to death and set up Timur Shah Oghlan in his stead.

[1] The authorities for this chapter include *A History of Persia*, by Sir John Malcolm; *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches*, by Joseph von Hammer; *A History of the Moghuls of Central Asia* (the Tarikh-i-Rashidi), by Ney Elias and Denison Ross; *A History of Bokhara*, by A. Vambéry; the *Zafar Nama* of Sharaf-u-Din Ali Yezdi, and the *Institutes of Timur* (ed. Davy and White).

This act caused a revolt, which was headed by an Amir named Bayan Selduz and by *Haji*[1] Barlas, of Kesh (the modern Shahr-i-Sabz, to the south of Samarcand), and the united forces of the Amirs defeated Abdulla, who fled across the Oxus and disappeared from the scene. The government was now administered by the victors, but the incapacity of Bayan Selduz, who was a hopeless drunkard, broke up the empire into a number of petty states, and *Haji* Barlas was not able to do more than maintain himself at Kesh.

The Governor of Mongolia, or Jatah, at this period was Tughluk Timur Khan, who, on seeing the state of anarchy into which Transoxiana had fallen, determined to annex it. He started on an expedition for this purpose in A.H. 761 (1360) and marched on Kesh; *Haji* Barlas, deeming the odds too great, attempted no defence and fled to Khorasan, where he was afterwards killed by brigands.

The Fame of Tamerlane.—Tamerlane has impressed Europe more than any other Asiatic conqueror. Chengiz Khan, a century and a half earlier, was not brought into direct contact with the Near East or with Europe, but conquered lands remote from the ken of the West, and it was not until after his death that his descendants subdued Russia to the north and Mesopotamia to the south. Tamerlane, on the other hand, overran Persia and Mesopotamia, and subsequently entered Russia and attacked the Kipchaks of the lower Volga valley; he also plundered Moscow. He then turned his eyes towards India, the reputed treasure-house of the world, which he invaded. Here he passed the limits both of Alexander the Great and of Chengiz Khan, the former having halted on the Beas, while the latter barely crossed the Indus. Westwards, too, he took Damascus and weakened the power of the Mamelukes, and finally defeated and captured Sultan Bayazid I. of Turkey on the field of Angora. No Asiatic conqueror in historical times has performed such feats of arms as these, and consequently none is entitled to the fame of Tamerlane.

[1] *Haji* signifies a man who has performed the pilgrimage to Mecca: it is a title of honour in the Moslem world.

His Birth in A.H. 736 (1335) *and his Early Years.*—The historians of Tamerlane trace his descent from a certain Karachar Khan, a vizier in the service of Chagatay, who was connected with his master's family. This genealogy is disputed, but its correctness is of little importance. We know that he was the son of Amir Turghay, chief of the Gurkan branch of the Barlas, a noble Turkish tribe, and nephew of *Haji* Barlas. From an early age he showed unusual promise both in the council chamber and in the field, where he served with distinction under Amir Kazghan, notably in Khorasan. He was also remarkable for his skill and endurance in the pursuit of game, resembling in this respect Alexander the Great.

His Submission to Tughluk Timur Khan.—Tamerlane, by the death of his father, had recently become the head of his family at the time of the flight of *Haji* Barlas, and this event proved a crisis in the life of the young Amir. As the *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* runs :

> His father was dead and his uncle had fled ;
> The people were exposed to the ravages of a stranger.
>
> Its enemies had placed the tribe in danger :
> It was become as an eagle without wings or feathers.

To save the situation, Tamerlane decided to tender his submission to Tughluk Timur Khan, by whom he was received with much distinction and appointed Governor of Transoxiana. In the following year the Khan of Jatah obtained possession of Samarcand and appointed his son Khoja Ilias Oghlan to the governorship of Transoxiana with the young Tamerlane as his councillor, although a certain Amir Begjit was given the supreme authority. Intrigues naturally followed, with the result that Tamerlane was obliged to flee from Samarcand.

His Early Wanderings.—Being pursued, he turned on his enemies and defeated them. Then with but a handful of men he sought out his brother-in-law Amir Husayn, the grandson of Amir Kazghan, who had recently been beaten by Tughluk Timur and was wandering in the desert. Together the two adventurers proceeded to Khiva, where the Governor attempted to seize them by



TAMERLANE.

(From F. R. Martin's *Miniature Paintings of Persia, etc.*)

treachery, and they were forced to retire to the desert for protection. There they led a life of risk and hardship, Tamerlane and his wife being on one occasion imprisoned by some Turkoman and escaping with difficulty.

Tamerlane or " Timur the Lame."—It was during this period that Timur acquired in Sistan his soubriquet of "the Lame"; and details of the story have been preserved. In A.H. 764 (1363), when wandering in Southern Afghanistan, he received an appeal for help from Jalal-u-Din Mahmud, the Keiani [1] Prince of Sistan, whose subjects had rebelled. Tamerlane and Amir Husayn immediately accepted the invitation, and with the aid of their veterans three out of seven forts held by the rebels were captured. The latter then submitted to their Prince, pointing out that if Tamerlane were allowed to capture the other forts, Sistan would lie at his mercy. Persuaded by these weighty arguments, Jalal-u-Din collected a force with which he attacked his allies, and although Tamerlane succeeded in breaking the centre of the Sistan army, he received two arrow wounds, one in his arm and the other in his foot, which was thus permanently lamed. From this he became known as Timur *lang*, or "the lame," two words which in European languages have been merged in the euphonious form of Tamerlane.[1] The word Timur signifies iron.

The Rallying of his Relations and Adherents.—In Timur's *Institutes* [2] there is a delightful account of how relations and adherents rallied to his standard during this period. It deserves quotation, if only as revealing the character of the great adventurer. He writes: "I had not yet rested from my devotions, when a number of people appeared afar off; and they were passing along in a line with the hill. And I mounted my horse, and I came behind them, that I might know their condition, and what men they were. They were, in all, seventy horsemen; and I asked of them saying, 'Warriors, who are ye?' and

[1] *Vide* Chapter XII.

[2] Timur's *Memoirs* (*Malfuzat*) and *Institutes* (*Tuzukat*) are works the genuineness of which is not universally accepted. Still there is much internal evidence that they were written by the Great Tartar himself, and they are of considerable value and of great interest as showing his ideals and personality.

they answered unto me, 'We are the servants of Amir Timur, and we wander in search of him; and lo! we find him not.' And I said unto them, 'I also am one of the servants of the Amir. How say ye, if I be your guide, and conduct you unto him?' When their eyes fell upon me, they were overwhelmed with joy; and they alighted from their horses, and they came, and they kneeled and they kissed my stirrup. I also dismounted and took each of them in my arms. And I put my turban over the head of Toghluk Khoja; and my girdle, which was very rich in jewels, and wrought with gold, I bound on the loins of Amir Sayf-u-Din; and I clothed Tukub Bahadur with my cloak. And they wept, and I wept also. When the hour of prayer was arrived, we prayed together."

The Campaigns with Khoja Ilias.—After their operations in Sistan the two companions in arms proceeded to Kunduz, and in A.H. 765 (1363) they won a battle against the forces of Jatah by a demonstration against the rear of the enemy and by lighting an enormous number of fires, which struck panic among them. After the fight Tamerlane regained possession of Kesh, the inhabitants of the district flocking to his standard in thousands. At this juncture Tughluk Timur died, and Khoja Ilias, on his way home to ascend the throne, was attacked by the two Amirs, who gained a victory after a hard contest and took Samarcand. But in the following year, A.H. 766 (1365), Khoja Ilias defeated the two allies and besieged Samarcand, from which, however, he was forced to withdraw owing to heavy losses among his horses.

The Struggle between Tamerlane and Amir Husayn, A.H. 767–771 (1365–1369).—After the first success over the Amirs of Jatah the two victors, probably owing to the intense respect which still existed for the family of Chengiz Khan, set up a puppet in the person of Kabil Shah Oghlan, but retained the power in their own hands. Their friendship, which had been welded in the furnace of adversity, could not withstand the strain of success, and open hostilities broke out, in which Tamerlane was at first unsuccessful. His fortunes were restored by a

most brilliant feat of arms, which deserves to be recorded as an illustration of the amazing enterprise and initiative of the famous conqueror. Karshi, a town only a few miles to the south-west of Kesh, had been captured by his rival, and he felt bound in honour to recover it. His forces were too small to assault it openly, and Amir Husayn was in the neighbourhood with an army too powerful to be attacked. Tamerlane, giving out that he had departed to Khorasan, crossed the Oxus. When he was satisfied that his enemies were deceived and "had spread abroad the carpet of riot and dissipation," he made forced marches, escaladed the walls by night, slew the guard at the gate and frightened away the rest of the startled garrison by sounding trumpets. The men who accomplished this consummate feat of arms were only two hundred and forty-three in number, and when this became known the little band was assailed by Amir Husayn. To the amazement of his enemies Tamerlane sallied out repeatedly and inflicted such loss in his charges that the larger army retreated. Not long afterwards Amir Husayn was forced to capitulate at Balkh, where he was put to death.

The Conquest of Jatah and of Khwarazm, A.H. 771–782 (1369–1380).—The successful issue of the contest with Amir Husayn gave Tamerlane complete control of Transoxiana, and for a full decade he was busily engaged in conquering the neighbouring states of Jatah to the east and of Khwarazm to the west.

The Surrender of Herat, A.H. 782 (1380).—In A.H. 782 (1380) he began his famous campaigns in Persia, his first objective being Khorasan. Ghias-u-Din Pir Ali, the Kart Prince, after being lulled into false security, was surprised and submitted. His submission was accepted, but so heavy a contribution was levied on Herat and other towns that they were reduced to dire poverty. Kandahar and Kabul also submitted later on, but isolated strongholds continued to resist in various portions of what is now termed the kingdom of Afghanistan.

The Siege of Kalat-i-Nadiri and of Turshiz.—The famous natural fortress now known as Kalat-i-Nadiri,

which has already been mentioned, won imperishable fame by resisting all attempts at assault after a surprise had failed.[1] Tamerlane invested the Nafta *darband*[2] in person, his Amirs attacking the other entrances. Some Badakshani hillmen found a way up the cliffs and negotiations for surrender were opened up, but while they were in progress the astute defender broke down this track. Fourteen assaults were delivered, but without result, and the great Tamerlane had to admit defeat. However, he left a force to blockade the fortress, and in the end it was surrendered owing to an outbreak of plague.

The city of Turshiz, the site of which I have examined,[3] was taken by force of arms. It was believed to be impregnable owing to its deep ditch and high walls; but the water was drawn off by well-diggers, a mine was run under the walls, and it had to surrender. The garrison was spared and re-enlisted under Tamerlane to serve in Turkestan.

The Sistan Campaign, A.H. 785 (1383).—The slow progress made by Tamerlane at this period, as compared with the ease with which the Mongols overran Persia, deserves attention. Herat had indeed submitted, but the resistance of Kalat-i-Nadiri and of other strongholds must have strained the resources of the Conqueror. Jatah, moreover, needed watching, and consequently it was not until the fourth year after the campaign began that Tamerlane was able to invade Sistan. Marching through Herat and Afghan Sabzawar, his cavalry devastated the whole district; Zirreh (which is probably the ancient Zaranj and the modern Nad Ali) was breached and stormed without resort to siege operations. Tamerlane now advanced on the city of Sistan, and made a personal reconnaissance. To quote from the *Zafar Nama*: "I made towards a gate, and when only a short distance away I ascended a mound which is called Kutluk, and halted upon the summit. As a precautionary measure I placed 2000 men-at-arms, in complete armour, in an ambush. When the people of the country saw me come to a stand

[1] *Vide* "A Fifth Journey in Persia," *Journal R.G.S.* for December 1906.

[2] A *darband* is a defile which forms the natural entrance.

[3] *Journal R.G.S.* for February 1911.



From a photograph by H. R. Sykes.

THE RUINS OF ZAHIDAN.

202a

upon the summit of the mound, they recognized whom they had to deal with, and Shah Kutb-u-din, the Prince of Sistan, despatched to my presence Shah-i-Shahan and Taj-u-din Sistani, who were the chief of all his leaders."

Tate,[1] who has made a plan of Zahidan, as the ruins are now termed, shows a mound close to the south angle of the walls, and there is little doubt it was from here that the Great Conqueror examined the city.

Meanwhile the Sistanis, unaware of the hidden force and careless of the safety of their deputation, swarmed out of the city and advanced to the attack. The usual ruse of a feigned retreat and a surprise by the hidden troops drove the undisciplined peasantry back to their walls with heavy loss, but they had fought bravely and killed many of the enemy, whose horses they stabbed with their knives.

Undismayed, the Sistanis next attempted a night attack, which at first caused some confusion, but the disciplined troops rallied and inflicted terrible losses on the enemy. The city was then assaulted by the entire army, and its ruler, realizing that he could not hope to resist for very long, resolved to surrender. During the course of the negotiations Tamerlane set off with a small escort to visit one of his divisions. Again the Sistanis assailed him, climbing down from their battlements. This act of hostility provoked Tamerlane to order a fresh assault, and the city was taken. Its garrison was put to the sword, and its population was massacred. Its great area is now so desolate and lifeless that when I visited it the wonderful lines of Isaiah[2] came to my mind: "An habitation of dragons, and a court for owls. The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow."

The Campaign in Northern Persia, A.H. 786 (1384).—In the year following the conquest of Sistan and the consolidation of his power in Khorasan, Tamerlane undertook what may be regarded as the first of his distant campaigns. Hitherto he had been operating in districts

[1] *Sistan*, Parts I. to III. p. 55. This useful work is by G. P. Tate of the Survey Department of the Government of India.

[2] Chap. xxxiv. 13, 14.

familiar to him and not very far from his base. Crossing the Oxus with a powerful and well-equipped army, he marched into the valley of the Gurgan and camped near Astrabad. Its ruler, who had submitted but had since rebelled, resisted for a month, and then, seeing no hope of success, left his state to be ravaged, and fled. After the conquest of Mazanderan, Tamerlane advanced on Rei and Sultania, and having taken these royal cities returned to Samarcand.

The Campaign in Azerbaijan, Georgia and Fars, A.H. 788–790 (1386–1388).—Two years later a second and even more distant campaign was undertaken, in the course of which Tamerlane occupied Azerbaijan, crossed the Aras, overran Georgia, and received the submission of the Princes of Gilan, of the Khan of the Lesgians, and of the Prince of Shirwan. His next objective was Van, the capital of the rising Kara Kuyunlu dynasty, which was sacked; its Prince, Kara Yusuf, leaving it to its fate and remaining in exile until the Conqueror had quitted the district.

Zayn-ul-Abidin, son of Shah Shuja of the Muzaffar dynasty, now occupied the throne of Fars. He had not followed out his father's policy of submission to Tamerlane, but had imprisoned his envoy. Consequently the Great Conqueror ordered a march on Isfahan, which formed part of the Muzaffarid dominions. This city surrendered, and a heavy contribution had been almost collected when the chance playing of a drum brought together a mob which attacked and slew the 3000 Tartars quartered in the city. Tamerlane was merciless in avenging this outbreak, and 70,000 heads built into pyramids taught a terrible lesson.

Tamerlane and Hafiz.—Shiraz hastened to open its gates when the invaders approached. Tamerlane sent for Hafiz, and the celebrated interview is described by Dolatshah as follows:

"I have subdued with this sword the greater part of the earth; I have depopulated a vast number of cities and provinces in order to increase the glory and wealth of Samarcand and Bokhara, the ordinary places of my

residence and the seat of my empire; yet thou, an insignificant individual, hast pretended to give away both Samarcand and Bokhara as the price of a little black mole setting off the features of a pretty face; for thou hast said in one of thy verses:

> If that fair maiden of Shiraz would accept my love,
> I would give for the dark mole which adorns her cheek
> Samarcand and Bokhara."

Hafiz bowed to the ground, and replied: "Alas! O Prince, it is this prodigality which is the cause of the misery in which you see me." The repartee delighted Tamerlane so much that he treated the poet with kindness and generosity.

The Campaigns with Toktamish, A.H. 790–793 (1388–1391).—Toktamish, the head of the Eastern or White Horde, was a great figure on the stage of Russia, Moscow being sacked by him in A.D. 1382. The sovereignty of the Western or Golden Horde also passed into his family, and thereby the two elder branches of the family of Juji[1] became united. Tamerlane had helped him when a refugee, but with marked folly and ingratitude he took advantage of his absence in Fars to invade Transoxiana, where he defeated the force which met him, and ravaged the country. The Great Conqueror returned to Central Asia, and after a long and exhausting march across the uninhabited steppe, at last, aided by the treachery of the standard-bearer of Toktamish, defeated the representative of the house of Juji at the Battle of Terek, inflicting on him heavy losses.

The Campaign in Fars and Irak, A.H. 794–795 (1392–1393).—In A.H. 794 (1392), hearing that the state of affairs in Persia was unsatisfactory, or more probably wishing to extend his conquests farther west, Tamerlane decided on another Persian campaign. He marched as before by way of Astrabad and Amul, reducing various strongholds which had held out against him and extirpating a nest of Ismailis, which had escaped from the massacre by Hulagu.

[1] *Mohamedan Dynasties*, p. 228.

At the beginning of the following year he advanced on Khorramabad and Shuster, attacking and capturing the Kala Sufid, celebrated for its connexion with Rustam, who obtained possession of it by a ruse.[1] He then marched on Shiraz, where to his astonishment his army, 30,000 strong, was charged by Shah Mansur, Prince of the Muzaffar dynasty, at the head of a body of 4000 armour-clad horsemen. Sharaf-u-Din, who was present at this engagement, gives the following spirited account: "Shah Mansur advanced at their head like a furious lion, and in opposition to his reason, which should have preserved in his mind a suitable idea of the person he had to do with. On a Friday, at the hour of prayer, he attacked our main body, composed of 30,000 Turks, the most dexterous men of their time, in a place named Patila: he however overthrew their squadrons, broke their ranks, made his way into the midst of them, and gained posts of the utmost consequence behind our army. Then he returned, furious as a dragon, to the fight, seeming resolved to lose his life. Timur stopped short with some of his favourites to consider the extreme vigour, or rather rashness, of this prince, who dared to attack him in person. Timur, seeing him come directly against him, would have armed himself with his lance to oppose him, but he could not find it, because Poulad Choura, the keeper of it, had been so vigorously attacked that he had fled and carried away the lance. Timur, who had only fourteen or fifteen persons with him, did not stir out of his place till Shah Mansur came up to him. This rash person struck the Emperor's helmet twice with his scimitar; but the blows did no harm, for they glanced along his arms: he kept firm as a rock, and did not change his posture."

The Prince was not properly supported in his gallant charge. The two wings of his small force fled, and, surrounded by enemies, he was slain by Shah Rukh, the celebrated son of Tamerlane, who cast his head at his sire's feet, exclaiming, "May the heads of all thy enemies be laid at thy feet as the head of the proud Mansur!" As recorded in the last chapter, this exploit of arms sealed the

[1] *Vide* Malcolm, *op. cit.* p. 27.

doom of the Muzaffar dynasty, all the members of which were put to death. Baghdad was the next objective of the Great Conqueror, and, unable to resist, the great city submitted after its Prince had fled.

The Siege of Takrit, A.H. 796 (1393).—From the erstwhile capital of the Caliph, Tamerlane marched north and besieged Takrit, a fort held by a noted robber chief named Hasan, who, confident in its strength, prepared to resist to the uttermost. The siege was the most celebrated of the day. The lofty walls, which rested on the living rock or merely connected portions of the cliff, appeared to be impregnable, but the army of Tamerlane was not to be denied. Seventy-two thousand men were employed in mining the solid rock, and with such success that at a given signal the mines, filled with combustibles, were simultaneously set on fire, the props were burned and many of the strongest towers fell. Hasan retreated, fighting bravely, to an inner citadel, which was attacked in the same manner, and the siege ended in the capture of the garrison, the members of which were distributed among the various regiments to be tortured to death. With pardonable pride Tamerlane ordered that a portion of the fortress should be left to prove his prowess to future ages.

The Second Campaign in Russia, A.H. 797 (1394).—Tamerlane's next exploit was to march across Kipchak to the heart of Russia. Moscow was plundered, and Toktamish, who had dared to invade Shirwan, again saw his country devastated. In the following year the Great Conqueror sacked Astrakhan and strengthened his hold on the Caucasus, and he concluded this arduous campaign by returning to Samarcand across Northern Persia.

The Invasion of India, A.H. 800–801 (1398–1399).—Tamerlane's design of invading India was at first opposed by some of his generals, who were appalled at the magnitude of the enterprise. An omen was sought in the Koran, and the verse "O Prophet fight with the infidels and the unbelievers" came forth and silenced all objections. The army, 92,000 strong, was divided into three corps. The first was despatched from Kabul against

Multan; a second corps was ordered to invade the Panjab, keeping to the foothills of the Himalayas, while the leader himself marched with the main body. Upon reaching the vicinity of Delhi Tamerlane, anxious to fight a decisive battle rather than risk the difficulties of a siege, entrenched himself and assumed the defensive. By these tactics he entirely deceived Sultan Mahmud, whose army he defeated, and by this victory secured the riches of Delhi, which he sacked.

The Campaign against the Mamelukes, A.H. 803 (1401).—After his return from India Tamerlane, who was now approaching his seventh decade, might well have rested on his laurels and deputed to his sons the care of his widespreading empire; but conquerors, like actors, seldom retire from the stage. Hearing that Ahmad, the Jalayr Prince, had returned to Baghdad, the veteran chief made forced marches into Azerbaijan, distant more than one thousand miles from Samarcand. Ahmad, to strengthen his position, put to death various inhabitants of Baghdad suspected of favouring the enemy, but a rising drove him out of his capital and he was obliged to take refuge with Kara Yusuf.

Tamerlane advanced into Asia Minor, and besieged and took Sivas. After this success he swung southwards into Syria, to avenge the murder of his envoy to Egypt; there Aleppo and Damascus became his prey. Returning eastwards, he took Baghdad by assault and marched to Tabriz, where he rested his army.

The Defeat of Bayazid, A.H. 804 (1402).—Tamerlane's last campaign was perhaps his greatest. In Central Asia, in Persia, and in India he had encountered no formidable state ruled by a warlike monarch, and with his large numbers, perfect discipline, and vast experience, victory must have become a matter of course.

The Osmanlis whom he was now to meet were descended from a Turkish tribe which had fled from the neighbourhood of Merv before the hordes of Chengiz Khan, and just a century before had founded a mighty dynasty. The early victories of this warlike people lie outside the scope of this work. It suffices to state that

in the stricken field of Kosovo, in A.D. 1389, they worsted the Servians and their Christian allies mainly owing to the bravery of Bayazid, and that seven years later at Nicopolis the chivalry of Europe broke and fled before the armed might of the Sultan, whose rapidity of action had earned for him the title of the "Thunderbolt."

When Tamerlane stormed Sivas, a son of the Sultan was put to death, and Bayazid, who was besieging Constantinople, hastened over to Asia Minor to meet the invader. But Tamerlane had meanwhile marched into Syria, and it was not until a year later that the two great conquerors confronted one another on the field of battle.

Bayazid appears to have become indolent after his great successes, and, moreover, he was notoriously avaricious, the most fatal of all failings in the East. Consequently he was no match for his great opponent, who was ever fit and ready for war. The decisive battle was fought at Angora, which had witnessed the final defeat of Mithridates by Pompey and at a later date the first victory of the Osmanlis. Bayazid brought his men on to the field tired and suffering from thirst, and some of his contingents deserted, relying on the reputation for generosity enjoyed by the invaders, whose agents had been active. The Janissaries and the Christian contingents fought splendidly, but the greater numbers of Tamerlane ultimately prevailed, and, as old Knolles writes, "He with much ado obtained the victory." Bayazid was taken prisoner and, after an attempt at escape, was chained at night; this circumstance, and the fact that the royal prisoner travelled in a barred litter, originated the legend of his confinement in an iron cage.[1] Tamerlane reaped the fruits of victory by occupying Asia Minor, including the ports of Brusa, Nicaea, and Smyrna. From the last-named city he expelled the knights of St. John. It is interesting to learn that Tamerlane wrote a letter to Henry IV. of England in which he offered free commercial intercourse to his subjects. Henry's reply, the draft of which is

[1] Bayazid appears in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great*, and is made to beat out his brains against the bars of the cage.

preserved, congratulates Tamerlane on his great victory over the Turks. Both letters were conveyed by John Greenlaw,[1] an English Minorite or Friar Preacher who was resident at Tabriz and is termed Archbishop John.

The Castilian Embassy to the Court of Samarcand.—Henry III. of Castile, son-in-law of "time-honour'd Lancaster," was noted for the embassies which he despatched to remote parts of the world, chiefly, it is to be supposed, with a view to forming alliances which should act as a check on the Osmanlis and neighbouring Moslems, but also with the purpose of extending the fame of Spain and of gaining knowledge of other countries.

We learn that two of his envoys were present at the battle of Angora, and that Tamerlane dismissed them after his victory with an ambassador of his own, who carried rich presents of jewels and fair women to the King of Castile. In continuance of this diplomatic intercourse Ruy Gonzalez di Clavijo[2] was despatched to the Court of Tamerlane on a second embassy in 1403. Thanks to the careful diary of this trusty old knight, we possess a vivid and most interesting contemporary account of the Great Conqueror.

Starting from Cadiz, accompanied by the ambassador whom Tamerlane had sent to the Court of Castile, the travellers experienced danger from both storms and currents, and upon reaching Rhodes were unable to obtain any accurate information as to the whereabouts of Tamerlane. They decided to make for Karabagh in Azerbaijan, and in pursuance of this design landed at Trebizond and proceeded by the well-known route to the frontier town of Khoi. There they met ambassadors from the Sultan of Egypt bearing gifts to Tamerlane, among them being "a beast called *Jornufa*,[3] . . . which was a wonderful sight"; and the two embassies travelled eastwards together.

Clavijo describes the beautiful mosques of Tabriz

[1] *Vide Original Letters illustrative of English History* (third series, vol. i. pp. 54-58), by Sir Henry Ellis. I have to thank Mr. A. G. Ellis for this reference.

[2] *Vide Embassy to the Court of Timour*, translated by Sir Clements Markham (Hakluyt Society).

[3] Giraffe.



THE COLLEGE OF SHIR DAR AT SAMARCAND.

(From a painting by Verestchagin.)

210a

"ornamented very skilfully with mosaic, and blue and gold work," and gives the population at 200,000 houses, or a million persons, with the remark that it was formerly more populous. Sultania, too, is described as an important centre, and some account is given of Gilan from hearsay. Continuing along the historical trunk route so often referred to, they mention the city of Teheran—for the first time, so far as I know—and a diversion was made to Lar, now the favourite summer camp of the English colony. Rejoining the Meshed road in the vicinity of Damghan, the ambassadors, who were ill from the constant riding and heat, reached Nishapur, where a member of the embassy died. At Meshed the Castilians were permitted to visit the Shrine of the Imam Riza, and a reference is made to the "large tomb which is covered with silver gilt."

The onward route lay by Merv, and the party nearly died of thirst in the desert before the Murghab was reached. The Oxus is referred to as "the Viadme which is another of the rivers which flow from Paradise. It is a league in width and flows through a very flat country, with great and wonderful force, and it is very muddy."

Crossing by a bridge of timber near Termiz, the travellers passed the famous "Gates of Iran," the Eastern Darband or "Shut Gate," and Clavijo dwells on the power of the monarch who was lord of both the celebrated passes bearing this name ; the other, to the west of the Caspian Sea, better known as Derbent, has been already referred to more than once. Kesh, the home of Tamerlane, is described, and its polished glazed tiles, in gold and blue patterns, made a great impression on the Castilians.

Finally Samarcand was reached, and after waiting for eight days, according to etiquette, the ambassadors were received by Tamerlane. The description of the Great Conqueror and of the audience is of historical value and had better be given in the words of Clavijo :

"Timur Beg was seated in a portal, in front of the entrance of a beautiful palace ; and he was sitting on the ground. Before him there was a fountain, which threw

up the water very high, and in it there were some red apples. The lord was seated cross-legged, on silken embroidered carpets, amongst round pillows. He was dressed in a robe of silk, with a high white hat on his head, on the top of which there was a spinel ruby, with pearls and precious stones round it. As soon as the ambassadors saw the lord, they made a reverential bow, placing the knee on the ground, and crossing the arms on the breast; then they went forward and made another and then a third, remaining with their knees on the ground. The lord ordered them to rise and come forward; and the knights, who had held them until then, let them go. Three *Mirzas*, or Secretaries, who stood before the lord, came and took the ambassadors by the arms, and led them forward until they stood together before the lord. This was done that the lord might see them better; for his eyesight was bad, being so old that the eyelids had fallen down entirely. He had not given them his hand to kiss, for it was not the custom of any great lord to kiss his hand; but he asked after the king, saying, 'How is my son the king? is he in good health?' When the ambassadors had answered, Timur Beg turned to the knights who were seated around him, amongst whom were one of the sons of Toktamish, the former emperor of Tartary, several chiefs of the blood of the late emperor of Samarcand, and others of the family of the lord himself, and said: 'Behold, here are the ambassadors sent by my son, the king of Spain, who is the greatest king of the Franks, and lives at the end of the world. These Franks are truly a great people, and I will give my benediction to the king of Spain, my son. It would have sufficed if he had sent you to me with the letter, and without the presents, so well satisfied am I to hear of his health and prosperous state.'"

Clavijo describes the beautiful gardens with their tiled palaces where banquets were given. The ambassador, who was invited, marvelled at the gorgeous tents, one of which "was so large and high that from a distance it looked like a castle; and it was a very wonderful thing to see, and possessed more beauty than it is possible to



AT THE DOOR OF TAMERLANE'S TOMB.

(From a picture by Verestchagin.)

describe." He also refers to the feast at which the marriage of one of the princes of the blood was celebrated and at which the drinking went on all night. It is interesting to notice that Sharaf-u-Din mentions the presence of the ambassadors ; "for," he writes, "even the smallest of fish have their place in the sea." Truly a delightful touch !

The Castilian gives instances of Tamerlane's justice, observing that "when a great man is put to death, he is hanged, but the meaner sort are beheaded." He also visited Pir Mohamed, son of Jahangir, who was named his grandfather's successor. He describes him as being very richly dressed in "blue satin, embroidered with golden wheels, some on the back, and others on the breast and sleeves." He was watching a wrestling match and does not appear to have condescended to address the envoys.

Finally Samarcand, the beloved city of Tamerlane, "a little larger than the city of Seville," is described as surrounded by many gardens and vineyards, a description which still holds true. Its inhabitants were mainly captives brought from every part of the empire and "they are said to have amounted to one hundred and fifty thousand persons, of many nations, Turks, Arabs and Moors, Christian Armenians, Greek Catholics and Jacobites and those who baptize with fire on the face, who are Christians with peculiar opinions."[1]

Here we must leave the Castilian Knight, with deep gratitude for his valuable account of the dread Tamerlane, whose kindness and liberality to this embassy, which was overwhelmed with gifts and supplies, contrasts very favourably with the starvation which Carpini endured when fulfilling a similar task at the Court of the grandson of Chengiz Khan.

The Death of Tamerlane, A.H. 807 (1405).—When Tamerlane returned in triumph to Samarcand after the defeat of Bayazid, he was, as the account shows, a very old man. But his lust of conquest did not diminish, and in A.H. 807 (1404) he convened a Diet at which he

[1] Perhaps Hindus with their caste marks are here referred to.

proposed the subjugation of China, on the double ground that the race of Chengiz had been expelled from that empire and also that the enterprise would be a holy war. The proposal was accepted with acclamation, two hundred thousand picked men were equipped, and the great army began its march. The Jaxartes was crossed at Otrar, the city which first saw the hordes of Chengiz Khan, and there the sudden illness and death of Tamerlane put an end to the enterprise.

His Character and Achievements.—Tamerlane, the "Lord of the Conjunctions,"[1] was the greatest Asiatic conqueror known in history. The son of a petty chieftain, he was not only the bravest of the brave, but also profoundly sagacious, generous, experienced, and persevering; and the combination of these qualities made him an unsurpassed leader of men and a very god of war adored by all ranks. Malcolm brands him for a massacre of his prisoners at Delhi, but, awful though this was, it was dictated by imperative military exigencies. Did not Napoleon act in a similar manner in the last year of the eighteenth century? In the *Institutes* it is laid down that every soldier surrendering should be treated with honour and regard, a rule which, in striking contrast with the customs prevailing at the period, is remarkable for its humane spirit.

The object of Tamerlane was glory, and, as in the case of all conquerors ancient or modern, his career was attended by terrible bloodshed. He sometimes ordered massacres by way of retribution or from policy, but there were few that had their origin in pure savagery. Again, Tamerlane was a devout Moslem, who, though he took advantage of the tenets of Islam for his own aggrandisement, was nevertheless a patron of learned men, a founder of mosques and colleges, a writer of some merit, and fond of the game of chess. He was also careful to allow no favourites, but decided everything of importance himself,[2]

[1] In the East it is believed that the great conjunctions of the planets portend the advent of super-men.

[2] The first of his twelve maxims runs: "It is necessary that his words and his actions be his own. That is to say, that his soldiers and his subjects may know that what the king sayeth and doeth, he sayeth and doeth for himself; and that no other person hath influence therein."



THE TOMB OF TAMERLANE.

(In the foreground is the white cenotaph of Tamerlane's spiritual guide; the jade cenotaph of Tamerlane appears to the left.)

(From a painting by Verestchagin.)

and in an absolute monarch this constitutes a virtue of no mean order.

His achievements seemed almost to border on the superhuman. He carried his arms in every direction throughout a long life, in no campaign was he worsted, and when he died, as Gibbon says, "From the Irtish and Volga to the Persian Gulf and from the Ganges to Damascus and the Archipelago, Asia was in the hands of Timur."

Tamerlane lies in a domed mausoleum at Samarcand. The cenotaph consists of a block of dark jade, believed to be the largest in the world, the actual tomb being situated in a vault below. I count it a special privilege to have visited the tomb of this great maker of history, where he lies with his relatives and his spiritual leader and is still known as "*the* Amir."



SHAH RUKH.

CHAPTER LX

THE TIMURID MONARCHS OF PERSIA

Baber was adorned with various virtues, and clad with numberless good qualities, above all of which bravery and humanity had the ascendant. In the composition of Turki poetry he was second only to Amir Ali Shir. . . . He excelled in music and other arts. In fact, no one in his family before him ever possessed such talents as his. Nor did any of his race ever perform such wonderful exploits, or experience such strange adventures, as did he.—*Tarikh-i-Rashidi* (translated by Ney Elias and Denison Ross).

Khalil Sultan, A.H. 807–812 (1404–1409).—Tamerlane made Pir Mohamed, son of his eldest son Jahangir, his sole heir. According to Clavijo he was then about twenty-two years old, and when news of the death of the Great Conqueror reached Samarcand he was absent at Kandahar. Advantage was taken of this by his cousin Khalil Sultan, son of Miran Shah, who was passed over for the succession. Being supported by the great nobles and the army, Khalil Sultan took possession of the capital and was proclaimed Sultan. Meanwhile Shah Rukh,[1] the fourth son of Tamerlane, who, as Governor of Herat, had sent a courteous invitation to Clavijo, decided to bid for the Empire, but hearing that his rivals had come to terms he retired to Herat and occupied himself with consolidating his position in Khorasan and Mazanderan.

Khalil Sultan, who retained possession of Samarcand, squandered the vast treasures amassed by his mighty grandsire on his mistress, known as *Shad-ul-Mulk*, or "Joy of

[1] The story runs that Tamerlane was playing chess when he received news of the birth of a son, and gave orders that he should be termed Shah Rukh, or "King and Castle," in allusion to this ancient game.

the State," and the scandal became so great that shortly after his accession two important nobles broke out into rebellion. Although the danger was staved off for the time, in A.H. 812 (1409) Khalil Sultan was seized by treachery and ceased to reign. Shah Rukh, having again taken up arms, now obtained possession of Transoxiana, and finally returned to Herat, which he made the capital, leaving his son Ulugh Beg to govern at Samarcand.

Shah Rukh, A.H. 807–850 (1404–1447).—Sultan Shah Rukh looms very large on the stage of Khorasan, in which province he had borne rule for some time before his father's death. He reigned as the heir of Tamerlane for nearly half a century in Persia and Central Asia. Throughout this period he set himself to repair the ravages and devastation caused by the recent conquests, Herat and Merv in particular benefiting by his beneficent activity. His wife, Gauhar Shad Aga, built the magnificent mosque and other buildings at Meshed which will be referred to in the next chapter.

The court of Shah Rukh was famous for its splendour, and like Ulugh Beg at Samarcand he attracted men of learning and science. Embassies, too, were a marked feature of this great monarch's reign. In A.D. 1419 he despatched ambassadors to the Emperor of China with letters written by himself, which are still extant[1] and in A.H. 845 (1442) he sent an embassy to the Samuri in the Deccan, headed by a certain Abdur Razzak, whose valuable and delightful narrative has been rescued from oblivion by the Hakluyt Society.

Shah Rukh, although devoted to the arts of peace, was by no means weak or unwarlike. He defeated Kara Yusuf of the Kara Kuyunlu dynasty in three great battles, and after the death of that Prince reduced his son Iskandar to the position of tributary ruler of Azerbaijan. We also read that in A.H. 824 (1431) he marched through the province of Kerman, where he was met by Sultan Oways, son of *Amir* Adugui of the Barlas tribe, who had ceased to pay tribute. At first Shah Rukh determined to flay the rebel alive, but ultimately pardoned him.

[1] *Asiatic Miscellanies*, vol. i. Calcutta, 1785.

A truly great ruler, Shah Rukh was first and foremost monarch of Iran, and we know both from history and from coins that his sway extended not only to Astrabad and Isfahan, but to more distant Shuster to the west, while his boundaries to the east stretched very wide.

Ulugh Beg, the Astronomer-King.—Ulugh Beg before he succeeded his father had governed at Samarcand for thirty-eight years, which were a golden age for the often devastated province. The encouragement he gave to science, to which he was devoted, has preserved his name for all time as the author of the famous astronomical tables, held to be the most accurate and complete which have been bequeathed by the East to the West. They were published in Latin by John Greaves, Savilian Professor of Astronomy at Oxford, about 1650 and reprinted a century later. To Ulugh Beg, moreover, Persia owes the calendar which is in use to-day. The era is termed *Sichkan Il*, or "The era of the Mouse," and in it there are cycles of twelve years, each of which is called after an animal, the names of the months being the signs of the Zodiac. For instance, on 21st March 1913 the year of the "Bull" began, and the first month is known as *Hamal*, or "the Ram," the second as "the Bull," and so on.

Ulugh Beg as a monarch was most unfortunate, for after his succession his nephew, the Ala-u-Dola, seized Herat and the person of his son Abdul Latif. No sooner was this pretender defeated than Turkoman plundered Herat, and almost simultaneously Samarcand was sacked by the Uzbegs. To complete the tragedy, the rescued Abdul Latif revolted, took his father prisoner, and murdered him in A.H. 853 (1449).

Abu Said, A.H. 855–872 (1452–1467).—The parricide did not enjoy his ill-gotten throne for long; for Abu Said, a descendant of Tamerlane, seized Samarcand, and although Abdul Latif defeated him in a battle he was himself removed from the scene very shortly afterwards by assassination. A Prince named Babar ruled for a short while, and after him Abu Said fought for the vacant



A SORTIE FROM SAMARCAND.

(From the MS. (Or. 3714) of Babar, Emperor of India, in the British Museum.)

throne with a cousin, Abdulla *Mirza*,[1] whom with the aid of the Uzbegs he succeeded in killing. He then engaged in a long struggle for power, and by A.H. 870 (1465) his authority was established in Transoxiana, Northern Persia, and Afghanistan. Two years later he invaded Azerbaijan with a powerful army, but Uzun Hasan, the "White Sheep" chief, cut off his supplies by raiding tactics and utterly defeated him. He was handed over to Yadgar *Mirza*, son of Shah Rukh and Gauhar Shad, and to avenge the death of the latter at his hands was beheaded.

The Last Princes of the Timurid Dynasty.—Sultan Ahmad, Abu Said's eldest son and successor, had to face frequent revolts, the southern provinces throwing off their allegiance, while his brother Omar Shaykh, father of Baber, defied him successfully in Ferghana. Despite this, the close of his long reign of twenty-seven years was looked back to with regret after his death, more especially in Bokhara, where he had erected many splendid buildings.

Sultan Husayn, the patron of Jami, of Mirkhond, and of Behzad the painter, was the last Prince of the Timurid dynasty. He summoned Baber to aid him in a campaign against Shaybani Khan, the Uzbeg chief who had recently appeared on the scene. To this fact we owe a vivid account of the monarch and his court. Sultan Husayn is described in the immortal *Memoirs of Baber* as a lively, pleasant man, whose temper was rather hasty and whose language was in accordance with his temper. He often engaged sword in hand in fight, and no member of the race of Timur ever equalled him in the use of the scimitar. He had a turn for poetry, and many of his verses are far from bad. Although not without dignity, he was inordinately fond of keeping fighting rams and of amusing himself with flying pigeons and cock-fighting. Baber goes on to say that the age of Sultan Husayn was certainly a wonderful age, and abounded with eminent men. Some of these will be referred to in the next chapter.

[1] *Mirza*, or "son of an Amir," signifies "Prince" when it follows the name. When it precedes it, the meaning is almost equivalent to our "esquire," although it is specially applied to secretaries or clerks.

The "Black Sheep" Dynasty, A.H. 780–874 (1378–1469).—Reference has already been made to the Turkoman tribe bearing a black sheep on its standards, which rose to power towards the end of the fourteenth century in the country to the south of Lake Van. Strengthened by an alliance with the Jalayr family, the Kara Kuyunlu,[1] as they are termed, established themselves in Armenia and Azerbaijan and finally succeeded to the kingdom of the Jalayr. Kara Yusuf, the second chief of the tribe, was more than once driven into exile by Tamerlane, and was one of the causes of the campaign against Bayazid, who granted him protection. He ultimately recovered his possessions in A.H. 808 (1405), and three years later added to them those of the Jalayr dynasty, defeating Ahmad the Il-Khanid and putting him to death.

Kara Yusuf, whose sister was Gauhar Shad, the wife of Shah Rukh, was succeeded by Iskandar. A later member of the dynasty, Jahan Shah, was a successful soldier, who conquered Georgia to the north and Fars and Kerman to the south. He was preparing to invade Khorasan when a rebellion of his two sons, who ruled in Tabriz and Baghdad respectively, forced him to forgo his designs, and shortly afterwards he was killed in a battle with the "White Sheep." The "Blue Mosque" of Tabriz was founded by this monarch.

The "White Sheep" Dynasty, A.H. 780–908 (1378–1502).—The Ak-Kuyunlu, or "White Sheep" dynasty, known also from a remote ancestor as Bayenderi, was founded in the same year as that of their rivals the "Black Sheep," by a grant from Tamerlane of lands in Armenia and Mesopotamia, in reward for services rendered to him. Their capital was Diarbekr, and their power was at first inferior to that of the rival tribe, with which a deadly feud existed. This originated in the action of Iskandar, who, when fleeing from Shah Rukh, had by chance seized Kara Osman, the grandfather of Uzun Hasan. He kept the chief in prison at Erzerum, where he died, and some time afterwards he exhumed the corpse, struck off the head, and despatched it in triumph

[1] *Lu* in Turki signifies "possessor of."



Flandin and Coste.

THE BLUE MOSQUE AT TABRIZ.

220a

to the Sultan of Egypt. Uzun Hasan, after the overthrow of Shah Jahan, defeated his son Hasan Ali, whom he captured and put to death together with every member of his family, in revenge for this barbarous insult. As mentioned above, Abu Said invaded Azerbaijan and was taken prisoner by Uzun Hasan, who, thanks to this dazzling success, became the virtual ruler of Persia. The death of this commanding personality occurred in 1478. He was succeeded by his son Yakub, who was poisoned after a reign of seven years. The empire was then broken up by domestic struggles for power, and way was made for the coming native dynasty of the Safavis.

The Alliance of Uzun Hasan with Venice.—A fascinating study is the part played by the republic of Venice in Asia not only in trade exploration but also in diplomacy.[1]

In Chapter LVII. we have seen that the efforts of Europe to induce the Il-Khans to attack Egypt and to rescue the Holy Land from the power of the Mamelukes resulted in little more than an interesting exchange of embassies and was entirely barren of actual results. Some two centuries passed after the interchange of these embassies, and during that period not only had the Osmanli Turks become the great Moslem power, but by the capture of Constantinople in A.D. 1453, Christendom was threatened more seriously than at any previous period. The event, although it affected Europe deeply, excited no real enthusiasm ; for, as Aeneas Sylvius (who is quoted by Gibbon) wrote, "Christendom is a body without a head ; a republic without laws or magistrates. The pope and the emperor may shine as lofty titles, as splendid images. . . . Every state has a separate prince, and every prince a separate interest."

At this juncture, or a little later, Venice stepped into the breach and attempted, though with little success, to unite the powers of Christendom. Not content with this, she sought an ally in Asia, and decided to send an embassy to Uzun Hasan, who was married to a daughter of Calo Johannes, one of the last Emperors of Trebizond. Another daughter of the same emperor had married

[1] *Vide Travels of Venetians in Persia*, edited by the Hakluyt Society.

Nicolo Crespo, the Duke of the Archipelago, among whose sons-in-law was Caterino Zeno, a merchant-prince of Venice; he was selected to visit the Court of the "White Sheep" and to persuade its monarch to attack Mohamed II., the conqueror of Constantinople.

Caterino Zeno was most kindly received at the Court of Uzun Hasan, where his relationship with the Queen made everything smooth, and the monarch was persuaded without great difficulty to attack the Ottoman Empire in conjunction with the fleets of Venice, which were operating on the coast of Armenia. In A.D. 1472 hostilities were opened and a horde of light horsemen ravaged Asia Minor, but a flying column under Mustafa, a son of the Sultan, defeated a Persian army. In the following year a powerful army of the Osmanlis invaded Persia, but being repulsed in a desperate attempt to cross the Euphrates retired, and Uzun Hasan, who had pursued, was in turn defeated and forced to retreat with heavy loss. After this, Caterino Zeno was sent as an ambassador from Uzun Hasan to rouse the princes of Christendom, and Josafa Barbaro took his place, but, not receiving support from Europe, Uzun Hasan wisely made no second attack on the formidable Ottoman power.

The Rise of the Shaybanid Dynasty.—Juji, son of Chengiz Khan, has been referred to at the beginning of Chapter LVI. His fifth son, Shayban by name, who accompanied Batu into Hungary in A.D. 1240, was granted an appanage between the Ural Mountains and the rivers Ilek and Irghiz, where his descendants multiplied. Coming down to the fifteenth century of the Christian era, we find among his descendants a certain Abul Khayr, who overran Khwarazm and Turkestan. His son was Mohamed Shaybani, known also as Shahi Beg Khan, almost the last great warrior of his race, who, after serving Sultan Ahmad, finally overthrew the last princes of the line of Tamerlane by the capture of Herat from the two sons of Sultan Husayn in A.H. 913 (1507). He founded the Uzbeg kingdom which has lasted down to the present day, the Amir of Bokhara and the Khan of Khiva both being lineal descendants of Shayban.

222a



BABER ON HIS THRONE.

(From a MS. in the British Museum.)

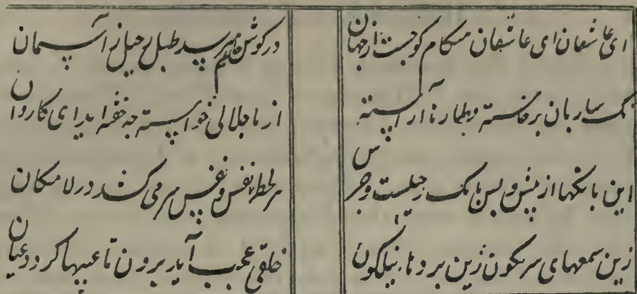
Baber.—No history of Persia would be complete without some account of Zahir-u-Din Mohamed, famous by his surname Baber, the "Tiger," son of Omar Shaykh *Mirza* and grandson of Abu Said. This conqueror of India was born in A.H. 888 (1483) and succeeded to his father's princedom of Ferghana when only in his twelfth year. His inheritance was disputed by his two uncles, who, however, after some negotiations retired, and in A.H. 903 (1497) the boy-king took advantage of the prevailing anarchy and marched on Samarcand, of which he obtained possession. We read [1] how deeply he admired the great mosque and the palaces set in gardens with their beautiful tiles and stately avenues of elms, poplars, and plane-trees ; the delicious melons and plums also won his approval. Treachery at home robbed him of the fruits of victory, and he was for a while deserted by his troops. But he raised a fresh army, and in A.H. 906 (1500) again captured Samarcand. Being afterwards defeated by Mohamed Shaybani, he had to swim the River Kohik to save his life, and, retreating on Samarcand, he was blockaded there by the victor and in the end forced to retire from Transoxiana.

It happened at this time that Kabul was in a state of anarchy, its governor (who was Baber's uncle) having died, and the nobles having seized upon the government. Baber made a bold bid for the derelict state, and won it in A.H. 909 (1503). Two years later he carried out the first of his famous expeditions into India, which culminated in the founding of the mighty dynasty of the Moghuls.

The Literary and Scientific Attainments of the Timurid Dynasty.—The dynasty of Tamerlane, which lasted for close on a century and a half, included many members who earned literary distinction. Tamerlane himself, in my opinion, wrote the *Memoirs* and *Institutes* that bear his name, and his literary talents were inherited by Shah Rukh, himself a poet of no mean order. His son, Ulugh Beg the Scientist, gave to the Turks a place in literature

[1] *Vide* Baber's *Memoirs*, by W. Erskine, 1826 ; also a later edition by Lt.-Col. F. G. Talbot, D.S.O., in 1909. There is no doubt as to the genuineness of this delightful autobiography.

and science which they had never before occupied; Baber, too, perhaps the most illustrious of Tamerlane's descendants, has added lustre to his race as a writer of poetry and history. The culture and attainments of these princes attracted the most brilliant men of the day, and to those who, like myself, have been privileged to travel in Central Asia, the names of Samarcand and Bokhara evoke imperishable memories of this great dynasty, whose splendid buildings challenge even in their decay our deep admiration.



THE "DIWAN" OF JALAL-U-DIN, RUMI.
(From a MS. in the British Museum.)

CHAPTER LXI

LITERATURE AND ARCHITECTURE UNDER THE MONGOLS

Up, O ye lovers, and away ! 'Tis time to leave the world for aye.
Hark, loud and clear from heaven the drum of parting calls—let none delay !
The cameleer hath risen amain, made ready all the camel-train,
And quittance now desires to gain : why sleep ye, travellers, I pray ?
Behind us and before there swells the din of parting and of bells ;
To shoreless Space each moment sails a disembodied spirit away.
From yonder starry lights and through those curtain-awnings darkly blue
Mysterious figures float in view, all strange and secret things display.
From this orb, wheeling round its pole, a wondrous slumber o'er thee stole :
O weary life that weighest naught, O sleep that on my soul dost weigh !
O heart, towards thy heart's love wend, and O friend, fly toward the Friend,
Be wakeful, watchman, to the end : drowse seemingly no watchman may.

From Nicholson's translation of the *Diwan* of JALAL-U-DIN, RUMI.

The Historians of the Early Mongol Period.—In the chapters relating to the Mongols reference has been made to the celebrated historians on whose writings they were based, and therefore it seems desirable to preface this brief review of literature under the Mongols by some details as to their life and work. Foremost in this class was Izz-u-Din, Ibn-ul-Athir, author of the great chronicle known as *al-Kámil*, or "Complete," which contains the history of the world as known to Moslems from the beginning down to A.H. 628 (1230). D'Ohsson made full use of this work and mentions it first in the account he gives of the various authorities consulted by him. He

also utilized the valuable history known as the *Tarikh-i-Jahan-Gusha*, or "History of the World-Conqueror," written by Ala-u-Din Juwayni (so called from a district in Khorasan), who being the Secretary of Hulagu enjoyed exceptional advantages. This history treats of the origin of the Mongols and the conquests of Chengiz Khan, of the Khwarazm Shahs, and of Hulagu's campaign against the Assassins, in which the author took part. A third history is the *Jami-ul-Tawarikh*, or "Collection of Histories," by Rashid-u-Din Fazl Ulla, who wrote in the reigns of Ghazan Khan and of his successor. It treats fully of the Mongols and also of the dynasties which ruled in Persia immediately before the Mongol invasion. A fourth historian is the Jacobite Christian known as Barhebraeus, or "The Son of the Jew." His *Abridgement of the History of Dynasties* is carried down to the accession of Arghun and is of great value. Finally there is Shibab-u-Din, Mohamed of Nisa, the secretary of the fighting Jalul-u-Din of Khwarazm, whose history was written in A.H. 639 (1241), ten years after the death of his master, and is a useful contribution to our knowledge of the stirring adventures in which he himself took a part.

The Later Historians.—Of the historians who wrote in the later Mongol period, Mirkhond, who was born in the middle of the fifteenth century, and his son Khondemir are the best known. Mirkhond was attached to the Court of Herat, and his patron was the cultivated Ali Shir, Vizier of Sultan Husayn. His great work is the *Rauzat-u-Safa*, or "Garden of Purity," which is a general history of Persia in seven ponderous tomes from the creation to A.D. 1471. His narrative, like those of other writers, is enlivened by numerous anecdotes. Khondemir was the author of an abridgement of his father's history and also wrote a history of the Mongols. Owing to the Uzbeg irruption, Khondemir quitted Khorasan in A.D. 1528 and lived at the Court of Baber in India.

Yakut, the Geographer.—Among the geographers, Yakut, son of Abdulla, occupies the first place. Born in A.D. 1179 of Greek parents, he was sold as a slave, but

nevertheless obtained a good education and travelled all over Persia. As already mentioned, he was among the fortunate few who escaped death at Merv. His flight across Northern Persia ended at Mosul, where in A.D. 1244 he completed his *Mujam-ul-Buldan*, or "Dictionary of Countries." This work has been made available to the European student by the gifted Frenchman Barbier de Meynard, and has been among my most valued books of reference.

Nasir-u-Din, the Philosopher and Man of Science.—Among the courtiers of the last Grand Master of the Assassins was Nasir-u-Din, the famous philosopher of Tus, who had been kidnapped to serve as his instructor and adviser, and who persuaded his master to surrender to the Mongols. He was treated with much respect by Hulagu Khan, over whom he exercised unbounded influence, and it was chiefly his advice which induced the Mongol Prince to undertake the final advance on Baghdad. His range included religion, philosophy, mathematics, physics, and astronomy, on which subjects he wrote at great length, and one of his chief claims to fame is that he persuaded Hulagu to found the celebrated observatory at Maragha.

The Sufis or Mystics.—Among the most famous poets of Persia were the mystics or Sufis, "Wearers of Wool," as they are termed, and this spirit of mysticism has permeated Persian literature and the Persian mind to a remarkable extent.[1] Its origin is hard to trace. Possibly it is a modern form of ancient philosophies, more especially of Neo-Platonism and Manicheanism. Others hold that it is a reaction of Aryanism against the formalism of the Moslem religion, and, again, the philosophy of India has been looked on as its fountain-head.

The true founder of the system is believed to have been Abu Said ibn Abul Khayr, who was born in Khorasan towards the end of the tenth century of our era. When asked to explain his doctrine, he replied, "What thou hast in thy head, *i.e.* thy ambitions, resign ; what thou bearest in thy hand throw away ; and whatsoever cometh

[1] Nizami and Attar, of the pre-Mongol period, were mystical poets.

upon thee, turn not back." Browne, in summing up the beliefs of this extraordinary man as revealed in his verses, gives such a masterly description of Sufi thought that I cannot do better than quote it :

"There is the fundamental conception of God as not only Almighty and All-good, but as the sole source of Being and Beauty, and, indeed, the one Beauty and the one Being, 'in Whom is submerged whatever becomes non-apparent, and by Whose light whatever is apparent is made manifest.' Closely connected with this is the symbolic language so characteristic of these, and, indeed, of nearly all mystics, to whom God is essentially 'the Friend,' 'the Beloved,' and 'the Darling'; the ecstasy of meditating on Him 'the Wine' and 'the Intoxication'; His self-revelations and Occulations, 'the Face' and 'the Night-black Tresses,' and so forth. There is also the exaltation of the Subjective and Ideal over the Objective and Formal, and the spiritualisation of religious obligations and formulæ, which has been already noticed amongst the Ismailis, from whom, though otherwise strongly divergent, the Sufis probably borrowed it. Last, but not least, is the broad tolerance which sees Truth in greater or less measure in all Creeds; recognises that 'the Ways unto God are as the number of the souls of men'; and, with the later Hafiz, declares that 'any shrine is better than self-worship.'"[1]

Jalal-u-Din, Rumi.—Jalal-u-Din of Rum, or Asia Minor, is held to be the greatest of all the Sufi poets. Born at Balkh early in the thirteenth century of our era, he may be claimed as yet another of the extraordinary men of whom Khorasan can justly boast. When he was five years old, his father Baha-u-Din, a leading theologian, was forced to leave his home, and, according to the story, passed through Nishapur, where Attar blessed the boy and foretold his future fame. Baha-u-Din settled at Iconium, and on this account the poet was termed Rumi.

His great work, the *Masnavi*, has exercised more influence on thought in Iran and Turkey than any other written in the Persian tongue, and is even spoken of as

[1] *Op. cit.* vol. ii. p. 267.

"the Koran in the Persian language." To quote Professor Cowell: "The stories themselves are generally easy, and told in a delightful style; but the disquisitions which interrupt them are often 'darker than the darkest oracles,' and unintelligible even to the Persians themselves without a copious commentary. When he is clear, no Persian poet can surpass his depth of thought or beauty of imagery; the flow of fine things runs on unceasingly as from a river-god's urn."[1]

The poem, which is of great length, opens with the following beautiful "Song of the Reed":

List to the reed, that now with gentle strains
Of separation from its home complains.

Down where the waving rushes grow
I murmured with the passing blast,
And ever in my notes of woe
There lives the echo of the past.

My breast is pierced with sorrow's dart,
That I my piercing wail may raise;
Ah me! the lone and widowed heart
Must ever weep for bye-gone days.

My voice is heard in every throng
Where mourners weep and guests rejoice,
And men interpret still my song
In concert with their passions' voice.

Though plainly cometh forth my wail,
'Tis never bared to mortal ken;
As soul from body hath no veil,
Yet is the soul unseen of men.[2]

His *Diwan*, or collection of odes, is less known than the *Masnavi*, although there runs a legend that Sadi, on being requested by his royal patron to select the finest and most sublime ode[3] in the Persian tongue, chose one out of the *Diwan* beginning:

Divine Love's voice each instant left and right is heard to sound:
We're bound for heaven. To witness our departure who'll be found?

---

[1] *Oxford Essays*, 1855.
[2] Translation by Professor E. H. Palmer.
[3] Nicholson's beautiful verse-translation of another of the odes is quoted as a heading to this chapter.

This ode he sent to the Prince with the following remarks: "Never have more beautiful words been uttered, nor ever will be. Would that I could go to Rum and rub my face in the dust at his feet!"

Jalal-u-Din founded the order of Mevlevi, or "Dancing Dervishes," whose performances are one of the sights of Constantinople and certainly constitute a fantastic side of Sufiism.

Sadi.—Persians differ among themselves on most questions, but they agree that the great province of Iran is Fars, and that among its chief claims to greatness is that it produced the two poets celebrated for all time as Sadi and Hafiz. Musharrif-u-Din, known as Sadi, owing to his having received the protection of Sad bin Zangi, mentioned in Chapter LIII., is deservedly the favourite poet in Persia, owing to his catholic tastes and the fact that he is intensely human. Unlike Attar and Jalal-u-Din, he was not passionately devout, but was half-worldly, half-devout. He was not one of the essentially mystical poets, having no visionary strain, and he adopted some of their forms rather as a vehicle of thought and expression than in order to preach Sufi doctrines.

Born towards the close of the twelfth century of our era, Sadi was left an orphan at an early age, as we know from his pathetic reference to the fact in the *Bustan*, which runs:

> Caress not and kiss not a child of thine own
> In the sight of an orphan neglected and lone.
>
> If the orphan sheds tears, who his grief will assuage?
> If his temper should fail him, who cares for his rage?
>
> O see that he weeps not, for surely God's throne
> Doth quake at the orphan's most pitiful moan!

Upon his father's death he studied at the renowned Nizamia College at Baghdad for a while, and then made a journey to distant Kashgar, the date of which, from a reference made by the poet, can be fixed approximately at A.D. 1210. His travels were indeed extraordinarily wide, ranging from India, where he had a grim adventure with a priest in the temple at Somnath, to Palestine, where

he was enslaved by the Crusaders until ransomed by an acquaintance. According to one account Sadi performed the pilgrimage to Mecca fifteen times, in itself a remarkable record of travel when the distances and means of communication are considered. Other countries visited were Egypt, Abyssinia, and Asia Minor.

When middle-aged this Persian Ulysses returned to Shiraz, which he ever loved, and published the fruits of his travel and experience of life in the *Gulistan*, or "Rose Garden," in the *Bustan*, or "Orchard," and in other works. The first-named, which students of Persian generally attempt when beginning to learn the language, although by reason of its terse epigrammatic form it is by no means an easy text-book, is more read and better known by all classes in Persia than any other work except the Koran. In its pages we sit behind the curtain with the poet and join him in all his adventures, laughing with him at his astuteness, and realizing how far removed Eastern ethics are from those we profess. As an example of this we may refer to the very first story, which points the moral that "an expedient lie is better than a mischievous truth"; and again, a soldier who deserted in battle is defended because his pay was in arrears. Such were the ethics Sadi preached, and such they remain in Persia to-day; if we ignore this fact we fail to grasp the Persian point of view. As Browne says, "His writings are a microcosm of the East, alike in its best and most ignoble aspects."

Of the *Gulistan* the following lines, translated by E. B. Eastwick, are typical:

Life is like snow in July's sun:
Little remains and is there one
To boast himself and vaunt thereon?
With empty hand thou hast sought the mart;
I fear thou wilt with thy turban part.
Who eat their corn while yet 'tis green
At the true harvest can but glean;
To Sadi's counsel let thy soul give heed:
This is the way—be manful and proceed.

To conclude, I give a charming translation by Browne of an ode on beloved Shiraz:

O cypress-tree, with silver limbs, this colour and scent of thine
Have shamed the scent of the myrtle-plant and the bloom of the eglantine.

Judge with thine eyes, and set thy foot in the garden fair and free,
And tread jasmine under thy foot, and the flowers of the Judas-tree.

O joyous and gay is the New Year's Day, and in Shiraz most of all;
Even the stranger forgets his home, and becomes its willing thrall.

O'er the garden's Egypt, Joseph-like, the fair red rose is King,
And the Zephyr, e'en to the heart of the town, doth the scent of his raiment bring.

O wonder not if in time of Spring thou dost rouse such jealousy,
That the cloud doth weep while the flowrets smile, and all on account of thee!

If o'er the dead thy feet should tread, those feet so fair and fleet,
No wonder it were if thou should'st hear a voice from his winding sheet.

Distraction is banned from this our land in the time of our lord the King,
Save that I am distracted with love of thee, and men with the songs I sing.

Hafiz.—The second of the two great poets of Fars, Shams-u-Din Mohamed, known by his title of Hafiz,[1] was born at the beginning of the fourteenth century—the exact date is not known—at Shiraz, where he resided throughout his life. During his youth he was devoted to pleasure, luxury, and the wine-cup, but, tiring of them in his old age, he became religious and attached to Sufiism. Unlike Sadi, he was no traveller, having the typical Persian fear of the sea. Being tempted to visit India by a pressing invitation to the Court of Mahmud Shah Bahmani, he travelled to Hormuz and embarked in one of the royal ships; but he was so sea-sick and generally upset that he insisted on being allowed to return to the port. After reaching land he wrote a charming ode in which the following verse occurs:

The glare of gems confused my sight,
The ocean's roar I ne'er had heard;
But now that I can feel aright
I freely own how I have erred.

[1] This title implies, as already explained, that its bearer knows the Koran by heart.



Flandin and Coste.

THE TOMB OF HAFIZ.

232a

The historical interview of Hafiz with Tamerlane has already been recorded. Two or three years later the poet died and was buried in a garden outside his beloved Shiraz.

His enemies wished to prevent him from receiving the burial of a Moslem, and declared that by publicly drinking wine and praising its use he had become a *Kafir* or infidel. After a hot discussion it was agreed that the question should be decided by lot. A number of couplets written by the poet were thrown into an urn, and a child, being instructed to draw, drew forth one which ran :

> Fear not to approach the corpse of Hafiz,
> Although stained with sin, he will enter heaven.

This completely disconcerted his ill-wishers and he was buried with all proper rites. Even now, however, at intervals some turbulent priest attains a temporary notoriety by defacing the tomb. An instance of this occurred some years ago when I was spending the summer at Shiraz.

Hafiz, the greatest of the lyrical poets, a materialist and a mystic, was a very typical Persian of his day ; and at Shiraz it is easy to understand his love of spending days in the shady gardens, with wine and women, seated by running water. In most parts of Persia the influence of Islam has tended to produce an external aspect which may be termed puritanical, but at Shiraz one is among an excitable, laughter-loving people, whom to know is to like.

The chief work of Hafiz is his *Diwan*, or " Collection of Odes," of which I cannot do better than quote a specimen, as translated by Cowell :

> Hither, hither, O cup-bearer, hand round and give the cup,
> For love at first showed easy, but difficulties have come
> At the odour of musk which the breeze will unfold from those tresses,
> From the curls of those musky ringlets, what blood hath fallen in our hearts !
> Stain thou with wine thy prayer-carpet if the old man of the tavern commands thee,
> For the traveller is not ignorant of the ways and customs of the inn.
> To me in the inn of my beloved, what peace or joy when every moment

The bell proclaims the summons, "Bind on your burdens, O travellers!"
Dark is the night; there is fear of the wave and a dreadful whirlpool;
How should they know our state, the careless ones on the shore?
Wilfully ye distort my every deed to my reproach;
How should that secret remain concealed, when they make it their common discourse?
If thou desire her presence, O Hafiz, forsake her not;
And when thou attainest thy desire, quit the world, and let it go.

Jami.—The last great classical poet of Persia, who flourished in the fifteenth century, was Abdur Rahman, known by his title of Jami from his birth at the little town of Turbat-i-Shaykh-Jam, situated between Meshed and the Afghan frontier.[1] Educated at Samarcand, he repaired to Herat, where he was well received by Ali Shir, the Maecenas of the age. His fame soon spread all over the Moslem world, and among his correspondents was Mohamed II., the captor of Constantinople.

A story still told of Jami runs that he was once visited by a rival and for three days the poets engaged in a contest, answering one another in beautiful verse. Jami, however, inspired by this rivalry, surpassed himself and reached superhuman heights. The stranger, realizing his inferiority, was observed to be overcome, his head fell on his breast, and when called upon to reply he remained silent—in the silence of death.

Jami's works, like those of Jalal-u-Din, deal chiefly with moral philosophy and mysticism. Thanks to FitzGerald, his *Salaman and Absal* is the best known of his works, although the translator does not rise to the heights he reaches elsewhere. *Yusuf and Zulaykha* is perhaps the best known of his works in Persia. The story running through this poem is that Zulaykha, Potiphar's wife, after tempting Joseph in vain, became blind from weeping, and Joseph, finding her in this state, prayed that her sight and beauty might be restored and finally married her. Sir William Jones translated extracts from the poem, one of which runs:

In the morning when the raven of night had flown away,
The bird of dawn began to sing;

[1] *Vide* "A Fifth Journey in Persia," *Journal Royal Geographical Society*, Dec. 1906.

The nightingales warbled their enchanting notes,
And rent the thin veils of the rosebud and the rose ;
The jasmine stood bathed in dew,
And the violet also sprinkled his fragrant locks.
At this time Zulaykha was sunk in pleasing slumber ;
Her heart was turned towards the altar of her sacred vision.
It was not sleep : it was rather a confused idea :
It was a kind of frenzy caused by her nightly melancholy.
Her damsels touched her feet with their faces,
Her maidens approached and kissed her hand.
Then she removed the veil from her cheek, like a tulip besprinkled with dew ;
She opened her eyes, yet dim with sleep ;
From the border of her mantle the sun and moon arose ;
She raised her head from the couch and looked round on every side.

The Tomb of Khudabanda at Sultania.—To deal at any length with the architecture of the period is beyond my powers and the scope of this work. I therefore propose to do little more than make a few remarks about buildings with most of which I am personally acquainted.

The most important city of the Mongol Il-Khans was Sultania, situated about one hundred miles to the west of Kazvin. This city was founded by Uljaitu, or Khudabanda, in A.H. 705 (1305). He entertained the project of transporting the bones of Ali and Husayn from Najaf and Kerbela respectively, and erected a superb building to receive the sacred remains. His plan was never realized and the building became his own mausoleum. Octagonal in plan, with a minaret rising at each angle, it is surmounted by a dome measuring 84 feet in diameter, the largest in Persia. According to Josafa Barbaro,[1] "the great cowpe is bigger than that of San Joanni Paulo in Venice." The tomb of Khudabanda is certainly the finest building of its kind erected under the Mongols. As Creswell[2] points out, its beautiful outline is not spoiled by the piling-up of material on its haunches, as in the case of Santa Sophia at Constantinople and of the Pantheon at Rome.

The Shrine of the Imam Riza.—The great pile at Meshed,[3]

[1] *Travels of Venetians in Persia*, p. 68.
[2] "The History and Evolution of the Dome in Persia," by K. A. C. Creswell (*Journal R.A.S.*, Oct. 1914).
[3] *Vide* my "Historical Notes on Khorasan," *Journal R.A.S.*, Oct. 1910.

the Glory of the Shia World, like the magnificent Gothic cathedrals in Europe, was erected during the course of many generations, each of which saw some addition. The most ancient part of the pile is the tomb-chamber, believed to be the actual mausoleum built by Mamun over the remains of Haroun-al-Rashid, and used a few years later as the burying-place of the Imam Riza.[1] The dome was apparently low and erected over a chamber 33 feet square, and it is stated that the present golden dome was built over the ancient one which still exists. For 200 years the tomb was neglected, but at the beginning of the eleventh century Mahmud of Ghazni dreamed a dream, in consequence of which he ordered the Governor of Nishapur to add to the shrine and to build a wall round it.

The shrine, apparently, was again neglected until the reign of Sultan Sanjar. An inscription which was copied for me shows that by his orders it was repaired in A.H. 512 (1118). This inscription and one bearing the date A.H. 612 (1215) prove that the tomb-chamber was not destroyed by the Mongols, although they sacked it; we may consequently accept this as the original tomb-chamber—a fact of some importance. The building was cased with tiles, of which fragments remain.

The Mosque of Gauhar Shad.—Among the greatest benefactors of the Shrine was Gauhar Shad, wife of Shah Rukh, and to her piety we owe the magnificent mosque called by her name, which perhaps constitutes the crowning architectural achievement of the Mongols. It is, indeed, a noble quadrangle, with four great arches. That to the south-west, known as the *Aywan-i-Maksura*, or "Portico of the Sanctuary," supports a blue dome, and in it the services are held. The illustration shows the beautiful tile and plaster work inside the Portico; it also gives the pulpit which, according to Shia belief, will be ascended by the Twelfth Imam on the Day of Judgment. The loftiness and elegance of the quadrangle, together with its perfect proportions and exquisite tile-work, make it the noblest mosque in Central Asia. In front of the magnifi-

[1] *Vide* Chapter L. p. 73.



Flandin and Coste.

THE TOMB OF KHUDABANDA AT SULTANIA.

cent portico is an inscription in large white letters on a dark-blue ground which struck me as most beautiful. I give a translation, as it is typical and of historical value :

" Her Highness, the Noble in Greatness, the Sun of the Heaven of Chastity and Continence, Famous for Nobility and Honour and Piety, Gauhar Shad, may her Greatness be eternal, and may her Chastity endure and may her Charity increase with true Thought and high, and with Pious Intent of Heart of Lofty Ideal for fulfilling and accomplishing her hopes in Allah, may He accept it ; from her private property for the benefit of her future state and for the Day on which the Works of every one will be judged, with Zeal for Allah and with desire to please Allah and with Thankfulness for the Benefits of Allah and for Praise of the Benefits granted by Allah, built this Great Masjid-i-Jami, the Holy House, in the era of the reign of the Great Sultan, and the more Just Khakan, the more Generous, the Lord of Rulers of the Arabs and of Ajam, the Sultan, son of a Sultan, the Father of Victory, Shah Rukh, son of Timur Gurkani, Bahadur Khan. May Allah make eternal his Kingdom and Empire ! And may he increase on the inhabitants of the world his Goodness, his Justice and his Generosity ! Thus may Allah accept her work with beneficent acceptance and may He bless her with His choice blessings and may He grant her the greater of the boons which He has promised to the good ! Baisunghur, son of Shah Rukh, son of Timur Gurkani, wrote this inscription with hope in Allah in 821 (1418)."

No description of this great mosque would be complete without a reference to the " Mosque of the Old Woman." The legend runs that an old dame who owned a tiny plot of the land required by Gauhar Shad declined to sell it at any price, but insisted that a separate mosque should be erected on it. To the eternal credit of the Royal Consort this unreasonable demand was complied with, and the " Mosque of the Old Woman " testifies to the fact.

I have visited Samarcand and have studied its splendid

colleges, but, like Vambéry, I award the palm to the stately pile of Gauhar Shad.

The Madrasa at Khargird.—Near Khaf, on the Perso-Afghan frontier, is situated a college which was erected during the reign of Shah Rukh, as I learned from its inscriptions. The edifice was massively built and is still in good condition, covering an area of five-sevenths of an acre. It was designed in the usual form of a quadrangle, with a noble gateway, and in the interior there were four fine porticoes. The coloured bricks were still intact at the time of my visit, but the exquisite mosaics were badly damaged. I noted their colour as sapphire-blue, with green, yellow, and white, the motive of the pattern being conventional Kufic lettering. Fine dark-blue tiles with conventional flowers in light blue, white, and gold had originally covered the walls, the finest being great stars, but these, alas ! had been almost entirely carried off. On either side of the main gate was a domed building, decorated with most artistic plaster mouldings. The panelling consisted of dark-blue tiles relieved by hexagons of white marble. This noble pile is now deserted and falling into decay, but my visit made me realize what a dazzling blaze of blue splendour it must have presented at the time of its completion in A.H. 848 (1445).

The Mahun Shrine.—In the vicinity of Kerman, at Mahun, is a beautiful shrine erected in memory of *Sayyid* Nur-u-Din, better known by his title of *Shah* Namat Ulla, who flourished in the reigns of Tamerlane and Shah Rukh. The Shrine is entered by an imposing gateway supported by two minarets, the predominating colour of which is a bluish green. Two gigantic old *chinars* or Oriental planes give that particular touch which, in conjunction with the bright sunlight, shows tiles to the best advantage. The oblong court which is first entered, together with the gateway, was erected by Mohamed Shah of the Kajar dynasty, and is consequently modern. A second courtyard with old-world rooms lies behind the first ; it was the gift of *Sayyid* Nisa, a disciple of the Saint. From this the blue dome is seen at its best ; indeed, the main building, consisting of a central chamber



From a photograph by H. R. Sykes.

THE SHRINE OF SHAH NAMAT ULLA.

238a

supported by galleries, is remarkably graceful and well proportioned. The western gallery, which is entered from the second court, was the gift of Shah Abbas in A.H. 999 (1601). Its inside walls are decorated with artistic frescoes of flowers.

The tomb of the Saint, composed of blocks of yellow marble, is placed beneath the dome, the most ancient part of the structure. This, as the inscription shows, was erected in A.H. 840 (1437) by Ahmad Shah, of the Bahmanid dynasty of the Deccan, who was the Saint's disciple. The doors, of sandal-wood, are falling into hopeless decay. The tomb of *Shah* Khalil Ulla, the grandson of the Saint, lies behind a lattice. The eastern gallery opens out on to a lovely courtyard through a gateway supported by two smaller minarets. In it are cypress-trees and flower-beds and a cruciform tank of running water.

The Shrine possesses a distinct charm, due perhaps to the combination of tiles, greenery, and running water, glorified by the deep blue of the cloudless Persian sky, and its dainty beauty makes a deep impression on the traveller.



ISMAIL I.

CHAPTER LXII

THE RISE OF THE SAFAVI DYNASTY

As when the Tartar from his Russian foe,
By Astracan, over the snowy plains,
Retires, or Bactrian Sophi, from the horns
Of Turkish crescent, leaves all waste beyond
The realm of Aladule, in his retreat
To Tauris or Casbeen.

Paradise Lost, Book X. lines 431-6.

The Ancestors of the Safavi Dynasty.—The Safavi dynasty traced its descent from Musa Kazim, the seventh Imam and younger brother of Ismail, who is referred to in Chapter LI. The family had been settled at Ardebil for many generations and was highly esteemed, especially one member called Safi-u-Din, or the "Purity of the Faith," a title from which the dynasty took its name. In equal esteem was his son Sadr-u-Din, who received a visit from Tamerlane, and on being offered a boon asked the release of Turkish prisoners brought from Diarbekir. Tamerlane acceded to the request, and the captives, after recovering their liberty, declared themselves the disciples of the Shaykh of Ardebil. Their descendants, emigrating by thousands into Gilan, aided his family to found a dynasty.

Khoja Ali, the next head of the family, proceeded on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, where, according to Malcolm, his tomb was still shown a century ago as that of the "Shaykh of Persia." Junayd, his successor, attracted so many disciples that Jahan Shah, the Kara Kuyunlu Prince, drove him into exile. He thereupon proceeded to the Court of Uzun Hasan at Diarbekir, where he was received

with high honours and given a sister of the Prince in marriage. Being prevented from returning to Ardebil, he lived at Shirwan, where he was killed in a local skirmish. His son Haydar inherited the warlike spirit of the Ak-Kuyunlu, and his uncle Uzun Hasan bestowed on him his daughter by the Greek princess. She bore him Sultan Ali, Ibrahim *Mirza*, and Shah Ismail. The last named was the founder of the Safavi dynasty, which was thus partly of Greek descent on the distaff side. Haydar apparently attempted to avenge his father's death by an assault on Shirwan, but he was slain[1] and his followers were defeated. Yet in death be became more powerful than during life ; for he was regarded as a martyr and his tomb at Ardebil became a place of pilgrimage. Sultan Ali succeeded his father, but was seized by Yakub, the reigning Ak-Kuyunlu Prince, and together with his two brothers was thrown into prison at Istakhr. They escaped from their confinement, but Sultan Ali was killed and Ibrahim *Mirza* died shortly afterwards in Gilan. Thus Ismail remained the only survivor of his father's family.

Ismail, the Founder of the Dynasty, A.H. 905–930 (1499–1524).—The strength of the Safavi family lay in Gilan. Ismail collected a small force in this province and his first enterprise was the capture of Baku and Shamakha in Shirwan. His success aided him to increase his following to 16,000 men, by whose aid he defeated Alamut or Alwand, Prince of the Ak-Kuyunlu dynasty. He then marched on Tabriz, which surrendered, and was proclaimed Shah. In the following year Shah Ismail defeated and killed Murad, brother of Alamut, in the neighbourhood of Hamadan. Alamut was subsequently handed over to the victor by treachery and was killed by the hands of Ismail, who possibly thereby avenged his father's death.

Reference has been made more than once in this history to the Persian love for the house of Ali as expressed in Shia doctrines, and at last the national feeling was satisfied in the person of the monarch ; for he was no mere chieftain of a warlike tribe whose elevation to

[1] Considerable divergence of opinion prevails as to how Haydar met his death ; indeed there is much obscurity as to events preceding the rise of Ismail.

the throne must provoke inevitable jealousies, but a veritable descendant of Ali, whose birth would unite the tribesmen in his service. The co-operation of seven Turkish tribes in his support furnished proof that a new epoch had opened. The Kizilbash, or "Red heads"[1]—a name by which the Ustajlu, Shamlu, Takalu, Baharlu, Zulkadar, Kajar, and Afshar tribes were honoured—all being sworn upholders of the Shia religion, regarded their sovereign as both saint and king, no incompatible functions in the East.

After annihilating the rival "White Sheep" dynasty, Shah Ismail annexed Baghdad and Mosul. Later on he obtained possession of Diarbekir, and so successful was he that in a few years he had conquered the wide-spreading empire of the Ak-Kuyunlu. His activity was exceptional, and we read of his being engaged in a single season in operations ranging from Baku in the north to Shuster in the south.

The Defeat of the Uzbegs by Shah Ismail, A.H. 916 (1510).—After securing his power in North-Western and Western Persia, Shah Ismail marched into Khorasan, which, as mentioned in Chapter LX., had fallen into the hands of the Uzbegs. He sent an envoy to Shaybani Khan requesting him to desist from his invasions, but the contemptuous reply was, "If Shah Ismail has suffered any diminution of his paternal possessions, it is easy to restore them to him in their entirety." To add point to the message, a staff and begging bowl were sent to the Shah. A spindle and reel were the return gifts, signifying that words were a woman's weapons.

Shaybani Khan's army had fought a battle in A.H. 915 (1510) against the Kazaks of the Dasht-i-Kipchak, and the Uzbeg monarch had engraved a record of what he claimed as a victory[2] in a defile to the north of Meshed, which I have visited, and which at any rate proves that much of Khorasan had fallen under the Uzbegs.

Shah Ismail advanced against the enemy with great

[1] These tribesmen wore a scarlet head-piece.

[2] Khondemir and other historians state that the Uzbegs were defeated in this campaign.

rapidity and met the Uzbeg army in the neighbourhood of Merv, where, by means of a successful ambush, 17,000 Persians utterly defeated 28,000 Uzbegs. Shaybani Khan fled to an enclosure by the River Murghab, and upon the capture of his place of refuge he was killed while attempting to jump his horse over the wall. His head was cut off and taken before the victor, by whose orders it was mounted in gold and set with jewels to serve as a goblet. After this victory Balkh and Herat were occupied, and Shah Ismail returned in triumph to Persia, leaving a large force to conduct further operations against the Uzbegs.

Shah Ismail and Baber.—Among the captives at Merv was a sister of Baber, who was treated with honour by the victor and restored to her brother. This act of courtesy was the beginning of an alliance, and Baber, taking advantage of the death of Shaybani Khan, invaded Transoxiana and defeated the Uzbegs, whom he pursued as far as the Iron Gates. Reinforced by a Persian army, he followed up this success, and, sweeping aside all opposition, once again entered Samarcand, amid demonstrations of enthusiasm. But he was not destined to occupy the throne of Tamerlane; for his acceptance of Persian suzerainty, combined with hatred for the Persian Shias in Central Asia, soon cooled the affections of the people. Meanwhile the Uzbegs, recovering from their panic, rallied round Obayd-Ulla, the successor of Shaybani Khan. Baber, with a force 40,000 strong, attacked the Uzbeg chief, who had no more than 3000 men under his command; but the smaller force, fighting with the courage of despair, gained the day. After this disaster, the date of which was A.H. 918 (1512), Baber retired to Hissar, to the south-east of Samarcand.

The Final Defeat of Baber by the Uzbegs, A.H. 918 (1512).—Once again, reinforced by a large Persian army, Baber marched on Samarcand, but at Ghajdavan, to the north of Bokhara, he was beaten in a fiercely contested battle. Accepting this defeat as final, he passed off the stage of Central Asia. To show how unpopular his alliance with the Shia Persians had been, I quote from

the *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*,[1] the writer of which, it must be remembered, was Baber's cousin. He describes the battle of Ghajdavan as follows:

> The Uzbeg infantry began to pour forth their arrows from every corner, so that very soon the claws of Islam twisted the hands of heresy and unbelief, and victory declared for the true faith. The victorious breezes of Islam overturned the banners of the schismatics. (The Turkoman) were so completely routed, that most of them perished on the field; all the rents that had been made by the swords at Karshi were now sewn up with the arrow stitches of vengeance. They sent Mir Najm and all the Turkoman Amirs to hell. The Emperor retired, broken and crestfallen, to Hissar.

It is to be noted that in this account Shah Ismail's troops are referred to as Turkoman. The Mir Najm was the Persian commander, whose full title was Najm-i-Sani, or "the Second Star." The result of this disaster was to restore Transoxiana to the Uzbegs, who for many generations thereafter were a serious menace to the eastern province of Persia. So indelibly have they impressed themselves on the memory of the inhabitants of Khorasan that the great meadow near Chinaran is still known as *Ulang-i-Shahi*, or "The Royal Meadow," probably after Shaybani Khan, who was also known as Shahi Beg. The Uzbeg monarch generally spent the summer in this locality for the sake of the grazing, and he built Geok Bagh, or "The Blue Garden," in which I camped some six years ago.[2]

The Campaign of Selim the Grim, A.H. 920 (1514).—Selim the Grim was one of the great conquerors of the house of Othman,[3] a cruel monarch revelling in bloodshed, but nevertheless a writer of Persian odes and a liberal patron to men of learning. The hatred felt for the Shia Persians in Transoxiana appears clearly enough from the failure of Baber to win success as an ally of the schismatics; and it is not difficult to understand why Selim I. and his advisers, who were equally fanatical, determined to crush the upstart power and the heresy

[1] P. 261.

[2] *Journal R.G.S.* for January 1911.

[3] The account of the relations between Persia and Turkey is mainly based on the monumental work by Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall.



Eugene Flandin.

RUINS OF A PALACE AT SULTANIA.

244a

it represented before it should be firmly established. Moreover, Selim was probably aware of the despatch of Persian envoys to Egypt and to Hungary.

The temper of the Sultan is shown by the fact that he despatched secret agents to ascertain the number of the Shia heretics in the Ottoman dominions and massacred forty thousand out of a total of seventy thousand. Having in this manner cleared his own dominions of possible sympathizers with the enemy, Selim wrote various letters to the Shah couched in the usual bombastic style, to which Ismail replied that he had given no provocation, and did not desire war. He added that the tone of the letters must have been due to indulgence in opium, and he therefore sent the royal secretary a box of the drug. As Selim was himself addicted to the vice, a fact which was probably known in Persia, the sarcasm went home.

The Persian monarch, most of whose troops were engaged in Central Asia, decided on a defensive campaign, and after laying waste the country to the west, posted himself at Chaldiran, in the vicinity of Khoi on the present north-west frontier of Persia. The Turkish force suffered from both thirst and hunger, but it constituted a regular army one hundred and twenty thousand strong, consisting mainly of cavalry, but including several regiments of musketeers and a contingent of powerful artillery. The Ottoman tactics were to draw the Persian cavalry within range of their artillery and muskets, and the guns were therefore concealed behind the infantry. Shah Ismail, aware of the Ottoman intention, separated his own force, consisting entirely of cavalry and perhaps sixty thousand strong, into two divisions, one of which he led himself, while the other was placed under the Chief of the Ustajlu. His plan was to attack the enemy on both flanks simultaneously. The charge which he led in person against the Turkish left wing was successful and forced the Ottoman troops back on to the rear-guard. But on the Turkish right the infantry, by retiring, unmasked the artillery, which was used with deadly effect. The Persian leader fell and his force broke and fled. The

janissaries, who had been kept in reserve, now opened fire on the horsemen commanded by the Shah, who, after performing prodigies of valour, fell from his horse wounded and was nearly captured. Upon remounting he fled, followed by his dispirited troops, and Selim won the hard-fought battle. The Persian camp became the victor's prize, all the male prisoners were massacred, and Tabriz submitted to the Turks.

The campaign was not prosecuted into the heart of Persia, as the Turkish army was mutinous and refused to proceed. Selim was obliged to evacuate Tabriz, which he sacked, and to content himself with the annexation of Kurdistan and Diarbekir. Georgia he also annexed, but this was afterwards recovered by Shah Ismail. Peace was not concluded, and frontier raids continued for many years.

In his next great campaign Selim turned his powerful army against Egypt, which he converted into a Turkish province. Of equal, if not greater, importance, was the arrangement made with the puppet Caliph, who was induced to make over to the conqueror his spiritual authority, together with the standard and cloak of Mohamed. In other words, the house of Othman succeeded to the Caliphate, and at the present time it is generally recognized as spiritual head of Islam by Sunni Moslems,[1] though not by Shias.

The Death of Shah Ismail and his Character.—Shah Ismail, who was a capable, brave leader, is regarded with much affection by Persians for having established the Shia doctrines as the national religion. He was also worshipped during his life as a saint, and his subjects fought with fanaticism on his behalf, often refusing to wear armour in battle. He was left-handed and of great personal strength; it is said that he never smiled after his defeat by the Turks. He died at Ardebil in 1524 and was deeply mourned by all his subjects.

Tahmasp, A.H. 930–984 (1524–1576).—Tahmasp, the eldest of the sons of Shah Ismail, succeeded to the throne

[1] Educated Indian Moslems appear to be giving up their belief in the spiritual supremacy of the Sultan and rather look upon him as the embodiment of the temporal power of Islam. The war now raging may modify this view.



SHAH ISMAIL KILLING THE AGA OF THE JANISSARIES.

(From a copy of a Persian picture in the Chehel Sutun Palace.)

in A.H. 930 (1524) at the age of ten, and was naturally in the hands of the chiefs of the Kizilbash tribes, who intrigued for power against one another. His first campaign was against the Uzbegs, whom his general defeated in A.H. 934 (1527) on a battlefield which was pointed out to me near Turbat-i-Shaykh Jam. A rebellion called the Shah to Baghdad, where the chief of the Kalhor tribe, which still exists in the neighbourhood of Kermanshah, had usurped the government. This rebel he put to death. Yet again, in A.H. 937 (1530), the Uzbegs invaded Persia and besieged Herat for eighteen months, until upon the approach of Tahmasp they retreated.

The Invasions of Persia by Sulayman the Magnificent.—The Ottoman menace was serious during the long reign of Sulayman the Magnificent. That monarch, upon learning of the death of Shah Ismail and the accession of his son, sent the latter a minatory letter couched in insulting language. The Persian monarch vouchsafed no reply, but despatched envoys to the King of Hungary and to the Emperor Charles VII. with proposals for an offensive and defensive alliance. Fortunately for Persia, its poverty and lack of resources made it a less desirable prey than the fair provinces of Hungary and Austria. Nevertheless, in A.H. 940 (1534) a Turkish army invaded the country, and after conquering Mesopotamia, took Tabriz. Encouraged by this success and by the submission of the rulers of Shirwar and Gilan, or desiring to outdo his father's exploits, Sulayman advanced as far east as Sultania ; he then, with the loss of part of his artillery, crossed the Zagros range and took possession of Baghdad. Four years later he again invaded Persia and captured Tabriz ; and subsequently he gained possession of the almost impregnable fortress of Van. Tahmasp, the "Bactrian Sophi," whose defensive policy is commemorated in the lines of Milton quoted as a heading to this chapter, followed up the invaders as they retreated, and, although the Persians lost heavily owing to a clever Turkish ruse in which a herd of horses was made to stampede the camp, the results of the campaign were indecisive.

The Fugitive Emperor Humayun.—The foundation by

Baber of the empire in India, with which from the beginning of the seventeenth century England was in close contact, lies outside the scope of this work. That illustrious monarch died in A.D. 1530, and ten years later his successor, Humayun, was driven out by an insurrection and took refuge in Persia, where Tahmasp, recollecting the ties that united the two royal families, not only received him with chivalrous courtesy, but aided him with an army to regain the throne. A memorial of the wandering of the royal fugitive exists in an inscription at Turbat-i-Shaykh Jam, which runs :

> O Thou whose mercy accepts the apology of all.
> The mind of every one is exposed to Thy Majesty.
> The threshold of thy gate is the *Kibla*[1] of all peoples.
> Thy bounty with a glance supports every one.
>
> A Wanderer in the Desert of Destitution.
> Mohamed Humayun.
> 14th Shawal, A.H. 951 (Dec. 29, 1544).

It adds to the interest of this somewhat pathetic memorial to learn that Humayun was married to a daughter of the Shaykh of Jam, who bore him the famous Akbar.

The Rebellion of Ilkhas Mirza, A.H. 954–955 (1547–1548).—Sulayman was encouraged to make another attempt on Persia by the rebellion of Ilkhas *Mirza*, a brother of the Shah, who had fled to his court and whom he treated with much distinction. He despatched an army, and Azerbaijan and Isfahan were taken ; but Ilkhas *Mirza* quarrelled with his allies and the campaign ended in failure. The Pretender was afterwards captured and put to death.

The Perso-Turkish Treaty of Peace, A.H. 962 (1555).—Since the foundation of the Safavi dynasty there had been a state of hostilities, either active or in suspension, between Persia and Turkey. Both states at last became weary of the war, and in A.H. 961 (1554) a Persian ambassador, the commander of the royal bodyguard, reached Erzeroum

[1] This translation I owe to the late Ney Elias (*Journal R.A.S.*, Jan. 1897). The *Kibla* is the "direction" towards Mecca.



SHAH TAHMASP ENTERTAINING THE EMPEROR HUMAYUN.

(From a wall painting in the Chehel Sutun, copied by Texier.)

248a

and asked for an armistice, which was granted. In the following year a second Persian ambassador reached the Ottoman camp. He was the bearer of a friendly letter, in which permission was requested for Persian pilgrims to visit the sacred cities. In reply Sulayman wrote that there would be peace between the two states so long as the Persians did not break it, and that the governors of the frontier provinces would be instructed to protect pilgrims bound for Mecca and Medina. This peace ended the first series of campaigns between Persia and Turkey, in which the latter power had generally been the aggressor, while the former had mainly confined itself to the defensive.

The Betrayal of Bayazid, son of Sulayman.—In A.H. 967 (1559) Bayazid, son of Sulayman, rebelled and sought refuge in Persia. He was received with much ceremony at Tabriz, but by way of precaution his troops were distributed among the Persian contingents. Sulayman opened a correspondence for the surrender of his son, and Tahmasp, with detestable baseness, showed himself but too ready to sell his guest. Some two years were spent in arranging terms, but in A.H. 969 (1561) Bayazid and four of his sons were handed over to the Ottoman emissaries and were executed. The price paid to Shah Tahmasp for the betrayal of his guest was 400,000 pieces of gold.

The Embassies of Anthony Jenkinson to Bokhara and Persia, A.D. 1558–1563.—The intercourse of England with the rulers of Persia, which has been described in previous chapters, now reached a new and more important development.[1] Under the Tudor monarchs our fellow-countrymen were writing a glorious chapter in the book of fame in connexion with Arctic exploration, wherein the cross of St. George showed the way. Among the earliest and most profitable voyages was the expedition which resulted in the discovery of the White Sea by Richard Chancellor, and the lucrative trade with Russia which was thereby opened up. This intercourse was developed by Anthony

[1] *Early Voyages and Travels to Russia and Persia,* edited by Morgan and Coote (Hakluyt Society).

Jenkinson, a typical merchant-adventurer of the period. Appointed in 1557, after the death of Chancellor, to the post of captain-general of the Muscovy Company's fleet sailing for Russia, he was undoubtedly eager to carry out the instructions of his employers, which ran: "That you use all wayes and meanes possible to learne how men may passe from Russia either by land or by sea to Cathaia." As the sequel proves, he learned much.

The Tsar Ivan the Terrible was most favourably impressed by the Englishman, and in A.D. 1559 despatched him as his ambassador to Bokhara, a remarkable compliment to his personality. During the course of this journey Jenkinson acquired a place among our greatest explorers as the first Englishman to descend the Volga and to visit Khiva and Bokhara. Throughout his travels he kept a careful diary, and we learn among other things that at the time of his visit, in A.D. 1559, the Uzbeg Prince Abdulla was about to start on the first of his great raids into Khorasan. Jenkinson returned safely to Russia, having not only accomplished his mission with success, but having at the same time acquired much information as to the route to Cathay. Later he returned to England.

In A.D. 1561 he again headed an expedition with instructions to attempt to open up commercial relations with Persia across Russia, a truly daring scheme in view of the fact that the latter power had only just acquired control of the Volga. But the route *via* Hormuz was out of the question, as not for another half-century was the English flag to appear in the Persian Gulf, and the Levant trade was monopolized by Genoa and Venice. Consequently, as Ivan waived all customs duties, the venture seemed good enough to tempt the lion-hearted Englishmen of the period.

Jenkinson, to whom the Tsar "committed matter of importance and charge, to be done when I should arrive in those countries," left Moscow with the Ambassador of Persia, and travelling down the Volga, reached Astrakhan without incident. He encountered a terrible storm on the Caspian Sea, which justified its bad reputation im-

mortalized in the odes of Horace.[1] The Englishman landed a little to the north of Baku, and, proceeding to Shamakha, was fortunate enough to gain the friendship of Abdulla Khan, Prince of Shirwan, who is described as "being a prince of meane stature, and of a fierce countenance, richly apparelled with long garments of silke, and cloth of golde, imbroidered with pearles and stone: upon his head was a tolipane (turban) with a sharpe end standing upwards halfe a yard long . . . and on the left side of his tolipane stood a plume of fethers, set in a trunke of gold richly inameled."

Taking leave of Abdulla Khan, Jenkinson travelled to Ardebil, crossing the Kur and passing through "a fruitfull countrey, inhabited with pasturing people, which dwell in the Summer season upon mountaines, and in Winter they remooue into valleys without resorting to townes or any other habitation." At Ardebil he described the "sumptuous sepulchre in a faire *Meskit*," or mosque, of Ismail, the founder of the dynasty, but no details as to his onward journey are given, except that he travelled across mountains destitute of wood, and in the end reached Kazvin, which was then the capital.

The Englishman's chances of success were much diminished by the fact that Tahmasp was at this time making arrangements to sell Bayazid to the Sultan. Jenkinson, however, obtained an audience and "thus comming before his maiestie with such reuerence as I thought meete to bee vsed, I deliuered the Queenes maiesties letters with my present, which he accepting, demaunded of me of what countrey of Franks I was, and what affaires I had there to do: vnto whom I answered that I was of the famous Citie of London within the noble realme of England, and that I was sent thither from the most excellent and gracious soueraigne Ladie *Elizabeth*, Queene of the sayd Realme, for to treate of friendship, and free passage of our merchants and people,

[1] Non semper imbres nubibus hispidos
Manant in agros, aut mare Caspium
Vexant inaequales procellae
Usque . . .
Book II. Ode ix.

to repair and traffique within his dominions, for to bring in our commodities, and to carry away theirs, to the honour of both princes, the mutual commoditie of both realmes, and wealth of the subiects, with other words here omitted."

Unfortunately the inevitable question of religion was brought up, and Jenkinson, confessing that he was a Christian, was told "Oh thou vnbeleeuer, we haue no neede to haue friendship with the vnbeleeuers, and so willed mee to depart. I being glad thereof did reuerence and went my way, being accompanied with many of his gentlemen and others, and after mee followed a man with a Basanet of sand, sifting all the way that I had gone within the said pallace, euen from the sayd Sophies sight vnto the court gate." It would have gone hard with the Englishman—for the Shah would probably have sent his head as a gift to the Sultan—if Abdulla Khan had not saved his life by writing "that it should not stand with his majestie's honour to doe me any harme or displeasure, but rather to give mee good entertainment . . . and that if hee vsed me euill, there would few strangers resort into his countrey." Tahmasp was ultimately persuaded by the arguments of Abdulla Khan, and Jenkinson returned to Shirwan, where he was treated with extreme kindness. Good fortune attended this great pioneer throughout, and he reached Moscow in safety with all his goods, including raw silk and dye-stuffs for the Muscovy Company, and silk brocades and precious stones for the Tsar.

The trade thus opened seemed at one time likely to be successful ; but the anarchy into which Persia fell and the losses through storms and pirates on the Caspian Sea convinced the English Company, after the sixth voyage, that the risks were too great. Consequently in A.D. 1581 the attempt was abandoned. But the failure of the enterprise was not inglorious. It trained the Englishmen who took part in it to the hardihood and valour characteristic of "the spacious times of great Elizabeth," and it enlarged the outlook of the English nation. This is seen from the following lines in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, which evidently allude to Jenkinson's exploit :

And Christian merchants, that with Russian stems
Plow up huge furrowes in the Caspian sea,
Shall vaile to us, as Lords of al the Lake.

Milton, too, must have obtained through these pioneers the information on which he based the lines quoted as a heading to this chapter.

An Account of Persia by D'Alessandri, A.D. 1571.—The later years of Tahmasp were comparatively uneventful. Uzbeg raids on Khorasan would not trouble him greatly at Kazvin, but a terrible famine which occurred in A.H. 957 (1571), and a visitation of plague which followed, probably affected the entire country.

Not long before his death the Shah was visited by Vincentio A. D' Alessandri,[1] Ambassador of Venice, who was sent to the Court at Kazvin to persuade Tahmasp that the Turks were about to seize Cyprus from the Venetians, and that unless he attacked the Ottoman dominions he would be the next victim. The mission failed in its object, but thanks to it we have an interesting description of Persia written by a competent observer. D' Alessandri states among other things that the route from Hormuz was entirely neglected and that the main route *via* Aleppo was deserted. He also mentions Anthony Jenkinson. His account of Tahmasp is far from flattering. He describes him as "of middling stature, well formed in person and features, although dark, of thick lips and grisly beard." He refers to the fact that he had not left his palace for eleven years and that the people were in consequence unable to present petitions to him. The roads are declared to be unsafe and the judges venal. Altogether the impression conveyed is that the country was utterly neglected by the monarch, who cared only for money and women.

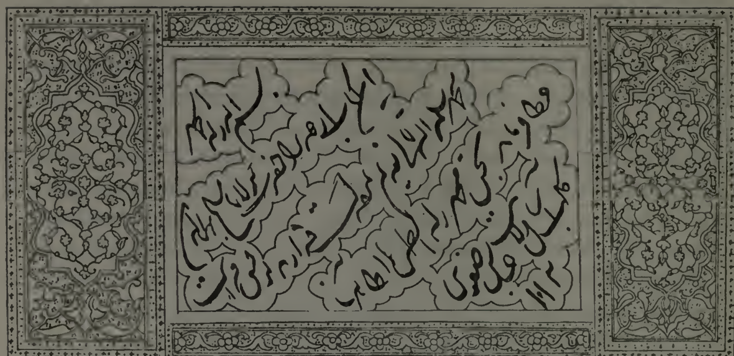
Ismail II., A.H. 984 (1576).—It was the custom among the Safavi monarchs to commit their sons to the guardianship of the great tribal chiefs, and consequently, upon the death of Tahmasp, who was poisoned by the mother of one of them, Haydar by name, furious rivalries were unchained. Haydar was on the spot and was the nominee

[1] *Travels of Venetians in Persia*, p. 225 ff.

of the Ustajlu tribe, but he was killed before his supporters could rally round him. Ultimately Ismail, the fourth son, who had been imprisoned by his father for twenty-five years, was placed on the throne. After establishing his power the new Shah, who was probably brutalized by his long imprisonment, put to death or blinded all the princes of the blood who were at Kazvin, to the number of eight, and also seventeen leading noblemen. Mohamed *Mirza*, known as Khudabanda, the eldest son of Tahmasp, being almost blind, was not regarded as a candidate for the throne. He had, however, been ruling Khorasan, and being afterwards appointed to Fars, left an infant son, Abbas, as nominal Governor of Khorasan, under the guardianship of Ali Kuli Khan, Chief of the Shamlu. Ismail sent messengers with instructions to put to death both Khudabanda and the infant Abbas, but just before the cruel order was carried out news arrived of the decease of the monarch from drink and an overdose of opium. According to another account, he was assassinated by fifteen men disguised as women.

Mohamed Khudabanda, A.H. 985 (1578).—The death of Ismail not only saved Mohamed's life, but secured him the throne of Persia. But he proved unfit to cope with state affairs, and his authority was challenged before long by the Amirs of Khorasan, who proclaimed Abbas as Shah. During the civil war which ensued the weak monarch abandoned his Vizier, *Mirza* Sulayman, to the Kizilbash chiefs, who put him to death. After this his position was enfeebled by the impolitic execution of the Chief of the Takalu tribe, and when the Turks invaded Persia he was deserted by the great feudatories. The valour of Hamza *Mirza*, the heir-apparent, alone illuminated this dark period. His first exploit was the annihilation of the Turkish advance guard near Khoi. A second force of Turks was despatched to avenge this disaster, but they too were cut to pieces. In spite of these brilliant Persian successes, the invading army advanced on Tabriz, which was taken and sacked owing to the defection of the Kizilbash chiefs. But Hamza *Mirza* had still to be reckoned with, and in an attack which he made in A.H.

993 (1585) he killed 20,000 of the enemy. Yet again, a month later, he inflicted crushing losses on the invaders; but shortly afterwards he himself suffered defeat because 3000 of his men were driven into a marsh. Not a whit discouraged, the intrepid Persian raided across the Aras and ravaged Salmas and Erivan. But internal divisions prevented these victories from bearing fruit, and Tabriz remained in the hands of the Turks. A plot contrived by the tribesmen to exclude Hamza *Mirza* from the throne proved futile, but the gallant Prince was assassinated by one of his favourites in A.H. 995 (1587), and with his death all immediate hope of expelling the invaders disappeared.



HOLOGRAPH DOCUMENT SIGNED BY SHAH ABBAS IN A.H. 1012 (1603).
(Through the courtesy of Abdul Majid Belshah.)

[Purport—Shah Abbas acknowledges his indebtedness for the book (on which he had written these lines) to Baha-u-Din.]

CHAPTER LXIII

SHAH ABBAS THE GREAT

His Person then is such, as well-vnderstanding Nature would fit for the end proposed for his being, excellently well shaped, of a most well proportioned stature, strong, and active ; his colour somewhat inclined to a man-like blacknesse, is also more blacke by the Sunnes burning: his furniture of his mind infinitely royall, wise, valiant, liberall, temperate, mercifull, and an exceeding lover of Justice.—SIR ANTHONY SHERLEY on Shah Abbas.

Shah Abbas I., A.H. 985–1038 (1587–1629).—The sixteenth century was a wonderful epoch both in Europe and in Asia, producing great rulers with prolific bounty. Of these, Charles V. and Elizabeth in Europe can be matched, if not overmatched, by Sulayman of Turkey, Akbar the Moghul Emperor, and the subject of the present chapter. And yet how unpromising were the prospects of the infant destined to be famous as Shah Abbas the Great! Left in Khorasan as its purely nominal Governor, he passed through boyhood a mere puppet in the hands of rival chieftains. His guardian, Ali Kuli Khan, Chief of the Shamlu, had united with Murshid Kuli Khan, chief of the Ustajlu, nominally to protect his rights, but actually for personal aggrandisement. As was to be expected, the

two nobles quarrelled and a fight ensued, in which Ali Kuli Khan, who was accompanied into the field by the young monarch, was worsted. The horse of Abbas was shot and he himself ran considerable risk, but the victors, stopping the pursuit, threw themselves at his feet, and Murshid Kuli Khan became his guardian by force of arms.

As we have already seen, Khorasan had proclaimed Abbas as Shah and Khudabanda had been unable to enforce his authority in the province. Shortly afterwards, the confusion consequent upon the death of Hamza *Mirza* encouraged Murshid Kuli Khan to advance on Kazvin, which he occupied. Khudabanda was then suppressing a rebellion in Fars, and advantage was taken of his absence to issue a proclamation that the houses and lands owned by his soldiers at Kazvin would be confiscated unless the owners returned speedily to claim them. This proclamation destroyed the power of Khudabanda, whose army deserted him to return to the capital ; and from this date —Khudabanda either dying a natural death or being assassinated—there was no opposition in Persia to the claims of Shah Abbas, who shortly afterwards killed Murshid Kuli Khan and thereby secured the reins of power.

The Turkish Invasion, A.H. 995–998 (1587–1590).—The death of Hamza *Mirza* and the domestic troubles that weakened Persia were turned to full account by the aggressive generals of the Sultan. An armistice had been negotiated by Khudabanda, but hostilities were speedily resumed as the cession of the province of Karabagh was demanded and refused. In A.H. 995 (1587) a battle was fought near Baghdad, in which Farhad Pasha surprised and defeated a Persian army 15,000 strong, after a desperate struggle lasting three days. As a sequel to the capture of Tabriz and to this success, Turkey annexed the western provinces of Persia, including much of Irak Ajami, Luristan, and Khuzistan. In A.H. 996 (1588) Farhad Pasha, uniting his forces with those of the Governor of Shirwan, invaded Karabagh and captured Ganja, which he strengthened by means of a hastily erected wall and a garrison of 3000 men.

The position of Shah Abbas was one of great weakness

owing to the Uzbeg invasions, and he wisely decided to make peace with the Turks in order that he might concentrate his entire resources against the Uzbegs. After long negotiations, conducted by Haydar *Mirza*, son of Hamza *Mirza*, peace was concluded in A.H. 998 (1590) by the cession of Tabriz, Shirwan with its ports on the Caspian, Georgia, and Luristan to the Turks.

The Uzbeg Invasions.—The Uzbeg kingdom reached its zenith under Abdulla II., who was contemporary with Shah Abbas, and who extended the boundaries of his empire in every direction. To the east Farghana, Kashgar, and Khotan, and to the south Balkh, Tokharistan, and Badakshan became his frontier provinces. On the western side Astrabad was surprised, and the Prince of Gilan, an ally of the Sultan of Turkey, was driven headlong from his country. Very early in his reign Abbas was threatened with the loss of Herat, which ultimately fell after a siege of nine months. The sacred city of Meshed was next invested. The young Shah marched to its relief, but illness delayed him, and the city was taken and sacked, its inhabitants were massacred, and the treasures belonging to the Shrine were carried off. Nishapur, Sabzawar, Isfarayin, Tun, Tabas, and other cities in Khorasan suffered a like fate. The province was indeed in a pitiable state until, in A.H. 1006 (1597), a great victory was gained over the elusive foe in the neighbourhood of Herat, after which the annual raids of the Uzbegs ceased for many years to come.

To protect this exposed frontier Abbas transported from Kurdistan some thousands of Kurds, with their families and flocks, and settled them to the north of Khorasan, where they acted as wardens of the marches. The newcomers were unable to hold their own in the fertile lands to the north of the ranges described in Chapter I., but in the valley of the Atrek they dispossessed the Geraili Turks and made good their position. To-day they are a flourishing community, still speaking their own language, and generally ruled by their tribal chiefs.

The Temporary Abdication, A.H. 1000 (1591).—Belief in astrology caused the monarch at this period to vacate



A KURDISH VILLAGE.

(From Wigrams' *Cradle of Mankind.*)

the throne, his astrologers having predicted that serious danger threatened its occupant. A certain Yusuf, probably a Christian and certainly not a Moslem, was crowned, and for three days was surrounded with royal state. On the fourth day he was put to death; and, the decree of the stars being thus fulfilled, Abbas reascended the throne on a propitious day with promises from the astrologers of a long and glorious reign. The victory over the Uzbegs mentioned above was gained shortly after this extraordinary incident.

The Arrival in Persia of the Sherley Brothers, A.D. 1598.—The gallant attempt of Jenkinson in the reign of Tahmasp to open up trade with Persia across Russia was an isolated episode which left no mark on the country, and deserves mention mainly on account of the courage and perseverance displayed. Under Shah Abbas, Englishmen first appear on the scene as gentlemen-adventurers,[1] and their influence on Persian policy was considerable. Sir Anthony Sherley, already distinguished as the leader of an expedition to the Spanish Main, and his brother Sir Robert Sherley, accompanied by twenty-six followers, reached Kazvin in 1598, and upon the return of Shah Abbas from his victory over the Uzbegs the two brothers presented themselves as English knights who had heard of the fame of the Persian monarch and desired to enter his service. Knowledge of the customs of Persia was shown by their making a splendid gift "of six pair of pendants of exceeding fair emeralds: two other jewels of topazes; a cup of three pieces set in gold, and enamelled; a salt, a fair ewer of crystal, covered with a kind of cut work of silver, and gilt, the shape of a dragon."

The young Shah, who was evidently flattered and pleased with the leader of the party, gave him in return royal gifts, including "forty horses all furnished, two with exceeding rich saddles, plated with gold, and set with rubies and turquoises." To these he added mules, camels, tents, and a sum of money.

The Reorganization of the Persian Army.—The force at

[1] This section is based on *Purchas His Pilgrimes* (1625 ed.), vol. ii.; also on *The Three Brothers*, or *The Travels and Adventures of Sir Anthony, Sir Robert, and Sir Thomas Sherley*, 1828.

the disposal of the Shah originally consisted of some sixty thousand Kizilbash horsemen, who would obey none but their chiefs. Consequently he was unable to give a command to any one outside the Kizilbash themselves, in whose hands the entire power lay. To meet this difficulty he halved the numbers of the tribal contingents and organized a body of ten thousand cavalry and twelve thousand infantry, paid and officered by the crown.

Allah Verdi[1] Beg, the celebrated Commander-in-Chief, was quick to see the advantages of the Sherley mission, which included among its members a cannon-founder. With his assistance and thanks to the Sherleys, batteries of artillery were formed, as well as regiments of regular infantry. Indeed, mainly through the initiative of our fellow-countrymen, a revolution was effected in the military organization, and in place of a feudal force of horsemen Persia soon possessed an army fit to meet that of Turkey in the field. To quote from the old English book of travels: "The mightie Ottoman, terror of the Christian world, quaketh of a Sherly feuer, and gives hopes of approaching fates: the prevailing Persian hath learned Sherleian arts of war; and he which before knew not the use of ordnance, hath now five hundred pieces of brasse, and sixty thousand musketiers: so that they, which at hand with the sword were before dreadful to the Turkes, now also, in remoter blows and sulfurian arts, are growne terrible."

The Formation of the Shah Savan Tribe.—Yet another counterpoise to the turbulent Kizilbash was obtained by inviting members of all tribes to enrol themselves as Shah Savan, or "Friends of the Shah." This stroke of policy was entirely successful; thousands of men joined the new tribe, and the Shah was released from dependance on the Kizilbash. The tribe remains powerful at the present day and inhabits a wide stretch of country between Tabriz and Ardebil and south-east as far as Kazvin.

Sir Anthony Sherley as Ambassador.—The great question agitating the Persian Court was whether war should be

[1] Malcolm terms this well-known nobleman Ali Verdi, but Allah Verdi, meaning "God gave" in Turkish, is correct. His curious death is mentioned in *The Glory of the Shia World*, p. 266.

declared against Turkey, by whose troops, it must be recollected, Tabriz was still garrisoned. Sherley was anxious to add to his services by visiting the Courts of Europe in order to invite their co-operation against the common foe, and Abbas, whose affection for the Englishman was deep and sincere, at once agreed to the proposal. As Malcolm states, the credentials given to Sherley were "perhaps the most singular by which any public representative was ever accredited," and to prove this it is sufficient to quote the following passage: "And al you princes y beleeue in Jesus Christ, know you, that he hath made friendship betweene you and me; which desire we had also heretofore graunted, but there was none that came to make the way, and to remoue the uaile that was betwene us and you, but onley this gentleman; who as he came of his owne free will, so also oppon his desire, I haue sent with him a chiefe man of mine. The entertainment which that principall gentleman hath had with me, is, that daylie, whils't he hath bin in thiese partes, we haue eaten togither of one dysh, and drunke of one cup, like two breethren. Therefore, when this gentleman comes unto you Christian princes, you shall credite him in whatsoeuer you shall demaunde, or he shall say, as mine owne person."

Most favourable privileges were granted to Christian merchants who might desire to trade with Persia. No Governor might interfere with them, no customs could be enforced on them, and no "religious men" might disturb them. In short, everything possible was done to make the stranger feel that he was welcome in Persia. This friendly spirit is still noticeable in the twentieth century, and makes the lot of Europeans much pleasanter than in other parts of Asia, where, if tolerated, they are disliked.

The embassy of Sir Anthony Sherley aroused deep jealousy in Moscow, where the policy of the Government had entirely changed since the days of Jenkinson. Not only was the Persian companion of the English knight treated as Ambassador, but he himself was thrown into prison for some time. In the end he obtained his release

and proceeded to the Court of the Emperor, where he was received with the utmost distinction and honour, as it was realized that a successful campaign by Shah Abbas would react most favourably on the situation in Europe.

From the Court at Prague the English knight made his way to Rome, whence the Persian nobleman, who had quarrelled with him, returned to Persia. Sir Anthony Sherley finally settled in Spain, where he entered the service of the King, who sent him on an embassy to Morocco. He apparently severed his connexion with Persia, and died in the land of his adoption.

The Successful Campaigns against Turkey, A.H. 1011–1036 (1602–1627).—It was not until fifteen years after his accession to the throne that Shah Abbas felt himself strong enough to cross swords with the Sultan and to attempt to regain the Persian provinces occupied by the great Sunni power. The actual outbreak of hostilities was due to an attack on Salmas by the Turkish garrison of Azerbaijan. Shah Abbas, having already decided to break the peace, marched rapidly from Isfahan, and after defeating the Turkish army besieged Tabriz; the city surrendered on 21st October 1603, and once again, after eighteen years, formed part of the Persian empire. The Shah then marched on Erivan, which he took after a six months' siege; he also occupied Shirwan and Kars. Meanwhile Sultan Mohamed III. had died, and upon the accession of the youthful Ahmad large Turkish forces were organized for a Persian campaign.

The two armies met in the vicinity of Lake Urumia. The Turks were one hundred thousand strong and the Persians only sixty-two thousand: but the former had lost much of their old discipline and valour, whereas the latter were disciplined and for the first time supported by artillery. The Turks advanced in their usual formation of a column of cavalry supported by infantry and artillery, hoping no doubt to draw the enemy's horsemen within range of their guns. Shah Abbas upset this plan of battle by detaching Allah Verdi with instructions to execute a wide turning movement on to the rear of the enemy and then to open out his force and create the impression that

his was the main body. The manœuvre succeeded admirably, and a large body of Turks was detached to the rear to meet, as they supposed, the Persian army. The result was confusion; and a charge, in which Sir Robert Sherley was wounded in three places, converted this into a panic and rout. The Turkish leaders fought bravely to retrieve the fortunes of the day, but in vain, and more than twenty thousand heads were laid at the feet of the Shah, who by this decisive battle freed his country and dynasty from the stigma of inferiority to the Turks. The fruits of the victory were great. Not only did Azerbaijan, Kurdistan, Baghdad, Mosul, and Diarbekir fall to the Persians, but their religious feelings were deeply gratified by the recovery of Kerbela, Najaf, and other sacred centres.

As may be supposed religious polemics raged during these campaigns. An utterance by the Turkish *Mufti* concluded thus: "I hope also from the divine Majesty, that in the Day of Judgment he will make you serve instead of Asses to the Jews, that that miserable Nation which is the Contempt of the World, may mount and trot with you to Hell." The Persian reply was still more insulting, but is too coarse to print. After long negotiations, peace was concluded in 1612, Turkey agreeing to recognize the frontiers as they were in the reign of Selim. By this act the Porte renounced all claim to the conquests of Murad and Mohamed III. Shah Abbas, on his side, agreed to give the Sultan two hundred loads of silk annually.

This treaty was not long observed. The Shah did not pay the stipulated silk, and he sent an expedition against Georgia, which was held to be in the Ottoman sphere of influence. In 1616 a powerful Turkish army set out from Aleppo, and, being joined by contingents in Asia Minor, laid siege to Erivan and other cities. This campaign ended in disaster; for Erivan was not taken and the Turkish army lost heavily from the cold while retiring. Two years later an attempt was made on Tabriz by means of a forced march, but failed because the invaders fell into an ambuscade laid by the Governor of Tabriz and suffered severe losses in consequence. Their

main army, however, advanced, and Shah Abbas was induced to open up negotiations for peace. In A.H. 1027 (1618) the terms agreed to in the previous treaty were accepted, except that Shah Abbas bound himself to a gift of one hundred loads of silk, instead of the two hundred previously agreed upon.

Seven years later a Turkish army besieged Baghdad with only four light fieldpieces. The siege dragged on for six months, and Shah Abbas then came to the rescue. After fierce fighting, with heavy losses on both sides, a mutiny forced the Turkish leaders to retreat, and thousands of their men died from starvation.

These campaigns were the first in which the advantage lay distinctly with Persia. Although the Sultan was generally the aggressor, the Shah's troops proved that they could at least hold their own against the enemy.

The Embassies of Sir Robert Sherley.—Sir Robert Sherley was appointed Master-General of the Persian army, and while holding this position won great distinction in the Turkish wars. The Shah bestowed many tokens of his favour on the gallant Englishman, among them being a grant of bread for sixty years! In spite of the failure of Anthony's mission, Abbas determined to despatch Robert Sherley on an embassy to the European powers. He left Persia in 1609 and visited Poland, Germany, and Rome. In 1611 he reached England, where he was well received by the King, but the object of his mission, which was to open up direct trade relations between Persia and England, met with strong opposition from the Levant merchants and was not at the time attained. Sherley remained in England a year and returned to Persia by way of India in an English ship.

In 1623 Sir Robert Sherley came to England on a second mission. On this occasion his position was weakened by the arrival of another ambassador from Shah Abbas in the person of a certain Nakd Ali Beg,[1] who, upon meeting Sherley, assaulted him. The English knight finally returned to Persia with Sir Dodmore

[1] We learn from the Court Minutes of the East India Company that Nakd Ali Beg before his departure was presented with his portrait "exactly and curiously drawn by Mr. Greenburie." The artist also painted a replica which is hung in the India Office.

Cotton, to whom we shall return in the next chapter. Nakd Ali Khan, who sailed in the same fleet, but was not allowed to land at the same time as Sherley, poisoned himself on the voyage to India.

An allusion to the pensions granted to the Sherleys, who were among the greatest travellers of the age, is probably to be found in *Twelfth Night*,[1] where Fabian says, "I will not give my part of this sport for a pension of thousands to be paid from the Sophy."

The Administrative Genius of Shah Abbas.—The fame of Shah Abbas does not rest on his military exploits alone: it is also founded on his genius for administration and especially upon the thoroughness with which he took in hand the improvement of communications throughout the Empire. He built caravanserais and bridges in such numbers that every ancient work is now credited to him. Even in muddy Gilan and Mazanderan his famous *Sang Farsh*, or "Stone Carpet," a causeway which traverses the Caspian provinces from east to west, is still used, although to judge from what I saw of it near Astrabad it badly needs repair.

The most striking act of his administration was the selection of Isfahan as his capital. There, in the centre of the Empire, on almost the only river of the plateau, a splendid new city grew up, approached by beautiful double avenues of oriental planes and stately bridges, which prepared travellers for the superb buildings that are still preserved to us. Thanks to the number of these travellers, many of whom wrote books, the splendours of the Safavi dynasty have been described more fully than any other phase of Persian history. To quote Lord Curzon, "Pietro della Valle, Herbert, Olearius, Tavernier, Chardin, Sanson, Daulier-Deslandes, Kaempfer, and Le Brun successively shed the light of an acute and instructed scrutiny upon the scene, and have added to the respective literatures of Italy, Great Britain, Germany, France, and Holland."[2]

The Great Shah realized the harm of fanaticism and

[1] This play was written in 1601–2, by which date news would have reached England of the splendid reception of the English knights by Shah Abbas.

[2] *Op. cit.* vol. ii. p. 22.

seclusion, and employed the European and his arts to strengthen his country. The breadth of his outlook is shown by his behaviour towards the Armenians. Instead of treating these Christian captives as slaves, he transported five thousand families with all their possessions from Julfa on the Aras to a new Julfa close to Isfahan. There they speedily took root and prospered and helped to open up trade with other countries. So flourishing was the Christian centre thus founded that, until quite recently, all Europeans, whether missionaries or merchants, who had business at Isfahan, took up their residence in this Armenian village. An attempt was made to establish a second colony in Mazanderan, but this proved a complete failure in consequence of the malarious climate, which killed off the Armenians by hundreds.

His Encouragement of Pilgrimages.—In nothing was the practical genius of Shah Abbas more clearly shown than in the difficult task of consolidating the various tribes and peoples that dwelt in Iran. This he effected in great measure by encouraging the idea that Meshed was the national centre for pilgrimage and the special glory of the Shia world. In the belief that practice is better than precept, he made pilgrimages to the shrine of the Imam Riza, and on one occasion he actually walked the entire distance of eight hundred miles from Isfahan. He also performed the menial task of trimming the thousand candles which illuminated the sacred courts, and the incident inspired the following verses by Shaykh Bahai :

> The angels from the high heavens gather like moths
> O'er the candles lighted in this Paradise-like tomb :
> O trimmer, manipulate the scissors with care,
> Or else thou mayest clip the wings of Gabriel.

Among the gifts of this monarch to the Shrine was his bow, which bears his name—a priceless treasure, little valued by Persians. He also visited Najaf, where he swept out the tomb of his ancestor Ali, and in every way he stimulated and encouraged religious feeling, more especially as expressed in pilgrimages. The fact

that he drank wine freely was but a trifling hindrance to his reputation for exemplary piety, Moslem ethics in such matters being different from those of the West.[1]

His Domestic Life.—It is with revulsion that we are forced to turn from the greatness of the Shah's public achievements to the brutalities of his domestic life. Yet even here some allowance should be made for the position of a sovereign of Persia whose ill-wishers would certainly endeavour to make his heir the instrument of their policy.

Briefly, the facts to be recorded are these. Abbas had four sons, and when they grew up he became jealous of their popularity and regarded their advisers as his enemies. Whether he had good reason for his fears we do not know. Safi *Mirza*, his eldest son, was the first victim. The Shah was led to believe that this Prince, who possessed the attractive qualities of valour and liberality, was plotting against him to avenge the death of a favourite who had been executed. In order that he might escape the odium of putting his popular son to death, he apparently arranged for him to be stabbed by a certain Behbud Khan, who alleged that he was avenging a private injury. The assassin took *bast*, or sanctuary,[2] in the Shah's stable, and was not only pardoned but promoted to high office. But remorse preyed on the father's mind and, seeking in further cruelty a strange alleviation for his sufferings, he ordered the wretched Behbud Khan to bring him the head of his own son. The order was obeyed and the following dialogue ensued: "How dost thou feel?" asked the Shah. "I am miserable," was the reply. "Thou shouldst be happy," was the Shah's rejoinder, "for thou art ambitious, and now in thy feelings thou art the peer of thy Sovereign." The second son, Tahmasp *Mirza*, fortunately died a natural death; but shortly after the murder of Safi *Mirza*, the two remaining sons became objects of their father's dreadful jealousy. Khudabanda, the elder, had acquired much

[1] In *The Glory of the Shia World*, p. 139, the Persian point of view is given.

[2] In Persia, Legations, Consulates, Shrines, Telegraph Offices, and Stables are regarded as sanctuary. The *bast* in the British Legation is referred to in Chapter LXXXII.

credit in an expedition to Arabia, and owing to his "affability, bounty, loyalty, courage and experience in arms, at home and abroad,"[1] was hailed as a promising successor to the throne. The Shah showed his displeasure by putting to death the Prince's tutor. Khudabanda hastened to court and expostulated wildly, going so far as to draw his sword. Thereupon his father had him blinded. The Prince became half insane, and in order to avenge himself killed Fatima, a daughter on whom the Shah doted, and then himself took poison. The eyes of the fourth son also were put out, and by this act Shah Abbas cut off the last of his sons from the throne.

His Death and Character.—These acts of cruelty marked the closing days of Abbas, who, at the age of seventy, died of a painful disease at his favourite palace in Mazanderan, after a long and glorious reign of forty-two years. In reviewing the character of a monarch it is proper to give due weight to the judgment of his own people, and it may at once be said that no sovereign who ever ruled in Persia is so much respected or beloved as Shah Abbas the Great. His portrait shows a very handsome man, with fine, clean-cut features, keen eyes, and large moustaches. Throughout his life he was noted for courage, activity, and endurance of fatigue. His ideas were far in advance of those current in his time, and his general outlook was eminently wide and sane, although his readiness to kill on the slightest pretext was deplorable. I prefer to think that the awful domestic tragedies which darkened the close of his reign were not purely wanton, but had at least some partial justification; for a prince so great, and in the main so just, was not the man to put his sons to death without what he believed to be good reasons. This account of the greatest of Persia's sovereigns since the Moslem conquest may be fittingly concluded with Chardin's dictum, "When this great Prince ceased to live, Persia ceased to prosper."

[1] Herbert, *op. cit.* p. 178, details these tragedies with many rhetorical flourishes.




269

Shah Sulayman.

CHAPTER LXIV

THE STRUGGLE FOR ASCENDANCY IN THE PERSIAN GULF

High on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
Showers on her Kings barbaric pearl and gold,
Satan exalted sat.

Paradise Lost, Book II., line 1.

The Effect on History of Rounding the Cape of Good Hope.—One of the most important events in history is the rounding of the Cape of Good Hope by Bartholomew Dias in A.D. 1487–8,[1] and the subsequent opening up of direct sea-borne trade between Europe and India. Until this feat was accomplished, Europe was obliged to purchase spices and other Eastern products from Moslem merchants, whose rulers drew vast revenues directly from the customs they levied and indirectly from the prosperity which this trade conferred. The establishment of direct sea intercourse with Europe changed all this. In the two arteries of trade, through the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea, the flow of commerce ceased. From that event dates the falling off in wealth and power of the Moslem states of Turkey and Egypt, although some generations were yet to pass before the sea trade was fully established and its

[1] For this date *vide* "The Voyages of Diago Cão and Bartholomew Dias, 1482–8," by Ravenstein, in *Journal R.G.S.*, vol. xvi. pp. 625–55. In the Museum at Capetown I have seen a fragment of the *padroñe* erected by the great explorer at Angra Pequena. The other fragments are at Lisbon.

results became plainly visible. This splendid service to Christendom was entirely the work of Portugal, which was the first European power to appear in the Persian Gulf.[1]

The Importance of Hormuz.—The port of Hormuz, the Ormus of Milton, mentioned by Marco Polo (see Chapter LVII.), and situated some six miles to the south-west of Minab, was of great commercial importance. Not long after the return journey of the Venetian the emporium was bodily transferred to the neighbouring island of Jerun for greater security, retaining there its old name, and it flourished amazingly for two centuries under Arab rulers, whose dominions also included Maskat and other possessions. The following description of the island by Pedro Teixeira, who visited it in A.D. 1587, deserves to be quoted: "This Isle of Jerun was of old volcanic, for which reason it remains so rugged as to amaze the explorer of its interior. It has a lofty range of hills running east and west from the sea to sea. From the foot of this to the northern promontory, whereon stands the fortified city, there is a less rugged plain. But beyond the main range there is nothing but lesser ranges, separate hills, and a rugged wilderness."[2] Teixeira goes on to state that there was no fresh water in the island except rain-water collected in cisterns. It seems extraordinary that a city should have flourished in spite of such drawbacks, but the testimony on the subject is unanimous. For example, in A.D. 1442, Abdur Razzak, whose description of the sea has been quoted in Chapter II., states that Hormuz, which "is a port situated in the middle of the sea, has not its equal on the surface of the globe." In A.D. 1504 Ludovico di Varthema, whose travels have been published by the Hakluyt Society, also refers to it as "the noble city of Ormuz, which is extremely beautiful." The description is borne out by the Persian proverb: "If the world were a ring, Hormuz would be the jewel of that ring."

The First Portuguese Expedition against Hormuz, A.D. 1507.—Greatest among the great Portuguese captains

[1] *Vide* Whiteway's *Rise of the Portuguese Power in India.*

[2] *Travels of Pedro Texeira*, p. 164. Ed. by Sinclair and Ferguson for the Hakluyt Society. We owe to this traveller a translation of the history of the Kings of Hormuz and also of Mirkhond's history, referred to in Chapter LXII.

was Alfonso D'Albuquerque,[1] who in A.D. 1507 started from Socotra with a squadron of seven ships to attack Hormuz. He coasted along Arabia, sacking the ports, including Maskat. To modern ideas his cruelty was repulsive, prisoners of both sexes being mutilated with the object of inspiring fear. Everywhere he was successful, and passing Musandam, which is termed Cape Macinde in the *Commentaries*, he approached Hormuz with flags flying and artillery ready. The point was doubled, and to the dismay of his captains a large number of ships were sighted in the harbour, supported by a powerful force drawn up on shore. D'Albuquerque boldly attacked the ships, and most of them, deserted by their cowardly crews, fell into his hands. After this easy success he proceeded to land his small force, whereupon the boy king submitted and agreed to pay tribute at the rate of £5000 per annum.

The Persian Demand for Tribute.—A few days after the ratification of the treaty, the king sent to inform D'Albuquerque that a representative of Shah Ismail had reached the shore opposite the island, and had sent to demand the tribute due to Persia. D'Albuquerque replied that "he might tell the king that this kingdom of Ormuz belonged to the King of Portugal, gained by his fleet and his men, and that he might know of a certainty that if any tribute should be paid to any other king, except the king D. Manoel, his lord, he would take the government of the kingdom and give it to some one who would not be afraid of the Xeque Ismael. He then sent to the ships for cannon-balls, guns, matchlocks, and grenades, and told him to say to the king that he might send all these to the captain of the Xeque Ismael, for that was the sort of money wherewith the King of Portugal had ordered his captain to pay the tribute of that kingdom that was under his mastery and command."[2] Thus with Shah Ismail began the connexion between Portugal and Persia, which terminated in disaster for the invaders a little more than a century later.

[1] *Commentaries of Alfonso Dalboquerque*, ed. by Birch for the Hakluyt Society.
[2] *Commentaries*, vol. i. p. 145.

The Failure of the Expedition.—D'Albuquerque decided to construct a powerful fort, the foundations of which were duly laid, but the intrigues of his captains reacted on the political situation and the work was stopped. A bombardment and a blockade both failed, and when three ships of his squadron of seven deserted, there was no course open to him except to make for Socotra. He returned to Hormuz later, but not in sufficient strength to effect anything, and thereafter the island-state resumed its allegiance to Persia, its king adopting Shia principles in order to gratify Shah Ismail.

The Final Occupation of Hormuz by the Portuguese, A.D. 1515.—Seven years passed, and D'Albuquerque, who had meanwhile become Viceroy of the Portuguese possessions in India, was able at last to attack Hormuz with a powerful fleet. He sailed from Goa with twenty-seven ships, carrying 3000 men and ample supplies. The local situation had entirely changed. A new puppet king reigned, and the power was in the hands of the Persian party, headed by a masterful personality known as *Rais*, or Chief, Hamid. But no open resistance to the Portuguese was possible, and their demand for permission to complete the fort was granted. *Rais* Hamid was assassinated by the Portuguese when he visited D'Albuquerque, and the King, freed from his influence, was ready to obey the victors in all matters.

The building of the fort proceeded throughout the summer, and when finished it was a splendid piece of work. Indeed so solid was its construction that when I visited it some fifteen years ago it was in excellent preservation. To quote from my description: "This grand old fortress is still practically intact, and is approached by a massive door, studded with iron spikes. It was protected in front by a bastion of great strength, flanked by a second bastion, after which the guard-house was passed. Beyond this the main lower portion of the fort was visible. It consisted of a square with a large tank, now empty, round which were barracks and store-houses, built into the massive forty-foot wall which has a parapet eighteen feet wide. A steep rise led to the inner work, in which



From a photograph by H. R. Sykes.

THE PORTUGUESE FORT AT HORMUZ.

we saw a superb reservoir, an oval forty feet high and fifty feet long, with a passage encircling it about twenty feet above the bottom ; it was, however, empty. A final rise brought us to the summit of the fort, some sixty feet above the ground level. There, overlooking the ruined city, was all that was left of a sumptuous palace, while numerous cannon lying about bore mute witness to the stormy past."[1]

The Beginning of English Maritime Intercourse with the East.—English intercourse with India may be said to date from the defeat of the Spanish Armada, which stimulated our ancestors to an extraordinary degree. Within a year of the passing of the Spanish peril, a body of English merchants memorialized Queen Elizabeth, who readily granted the permission they desired to trade with India. The pioneer efforts failed but the practicability of the scheme was proved, and a successful voyage to Bantam by the first Dutch expedition increased the general interest, which culminated in the grant of a Charter of Incorporation to the "Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading into the East Indies."

The first expedition of the new company started in A.D. 1601, under the eminent seaman James Lancaster, and two years later it returned with a rich freight, including one million pounds weight of pepper. The vicissitudes of these early voyages and of the merchants engaged in them are recorded in *Letters received by the East India Company*,[2] and we learn from them how intercourse was opened up with Persia.

The First English Attempt to Trade with Persia by Sea, A.D. 1614.—When the English factors first visited the Moghul Court, their broad cloth sold well, and a large quantity was ordered from England. But when this arrived it had ceased to be a novelty, and as there was little demand a new market was sorely needed. The Chief Factor had learned from an Englishman named

[1] *Ten Thousand Miles, etc.*, p. 288.

[2] These volumes have been mainly edited by W. Foster, the gifted Registrar of the India Office, and the series has been continued in the *English Factories in India*. Foster has also edited *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India*, which contains an excellent account of the opening up of trade with Persia. I have also consulted the *Calendar of State Papers*, ed. by Noel Sainsbury.

Steele, who had travelled overland from Aleppo to India, that in Persia they might feel sure "of the vent of much cloth, in regard their country is cold, and that men, women and children are clothed therewith some five months in the year." He also added that silk could be purchased 50 per cent cheaper than at Aleppo.

With admirable initiative, it was therefore decided by the factors at Surat to send Steele and a factor named Crouther to Isfahan to obtain a *farman* or "order" from Shah Abbas. They were furnished also with letters to Sir Robert Sherley, who had recently returned to Persia. In A.D. 1614 these pioneers of commerce started off from India, and, thanks to Sherley, three identical *farmans* were obtained from Shah Abbas, ordering the governors of the ports to aid any British vessels. One of these was sent to Jask, which was selected because the Portuguese held Hormuz.

The Journey of Connock, A.D. 1616–1617.—The *James* was selected for the venture and Connock was appointed leader of the expedition. Sailing from Surat he was well received at Jask and posted ahead to Isfahan. There, to his disappointment, he learned that the Shah was absent on the Turkish frontier. Undiscouraged, however, he persuaded William Robbins, an Englishman who lived at Isfahan and dealt in jewels, to accompany him to the royal camp. He was received with much favour by the Shah, who drank to the health of King James on his bended knee and issued a most satisfactory *farman*. In return Connock promised to send for peacocks and turkeys, which were unknown in Persia, and also for toy dogs, which he terms "little little women's curs."

The Persian Question of the Period.—The Persian question, from the point of view of the English, was the silk question. Silk was a royal monopoly, and the Shah was anxious to export it through the Persian Gulf for two reasons; in order to deprive the Turks of the customs which they levied, and because he hoped for a better price. Sir Robert Sherley had attempted to persuade Phillip III. (who, it must be remembered, ruled over

both Spain and Portugal[1]) to take the silk, but his proposals had not been well received; and in England the East India merchants had said "the way is long and dangerous, the trade uncertain, and must quite cut off our traffic with the Turk."

When Steele reached Isfahan, Sherley had returned to Persia, and was preparing to start on a second mission to the Court of Spain. Roe, the English Ambassador at the Court of the Great Moghul, believing that he was bound to succeed, was opposed to any further steps towards utilizing the *farman*. The factors, however, at a meeting held at Surat in A.D. 1616, decided that, owing to the departure of Sherley (whom they regarded with mistrust), the state of war existing between Persia and Turkey, and the necessity of selling their broadcloth, an attempt to trade should be made, and the event proved that they were justified in their decision.

The Spanish Embassy to Persia, 1618–1619.—While Sherley was in Madrid on his second mission, the Spanish government despatched an embassy to Persia headed by Don Garcia de Silva y Figueroa, who wrote a voluminous account of his journey. The Ambassador landed at Hormuz, and travelling *via* Shiraz and Isfahan reached the Persian Court at Kazvin. He was well received and was favourably impressed by the Shah, but in the main object of his mission, which was to obtain a guarantee for the security of Hormuz, he was unsuccessful.

The Battle of Jask, A.D. 1620.—While Connock was in Persia a strong Portuguese squadron from Hormuz visited Jask in search of the *James*, which had fortunately returned to Surat. In A.D. 1618 it was decided to continue the Persian trade, and the whole fleet assembled at Surat was despatched to Jask, where the Portuguese were found ready to intercept the English squadron. There was a skirmish, followed by a period of inaction; but when the English realized that their opponents were unwilling to attack, they bore down on the Portuguese, and the historical engagement off the eastern point of

[1] From 1580 to 1640 Portugal formed a portion of the Spanish Empire, and this connexion was a prime factor in the decay of its power in the East.

Jask was fought on the 28th of December 1620. The English squadron comprised the *London*, the *Hart*, the *Robucke* and the *Eagle*. The Portuguese fleet consisted of "two Portingall gallions bigger than the *London*, and two Flemish Shipps, one much about the burthen of the *Hart*, the other lesser than the *Robucke* or *Eagle*."[1]

The writer of the account continues: "About nine of (the) clocke, the Lord sending us apprettie easterlie gale, our fleete weighed and put all things in order for fight. The *London* and *Hart* anchored within a cables length and halfe from them upon their broadsides, and so indured the hottest burden of this second daies fight; for no sooner were they at anchor but that it fell calme and so continued all daie, in so much that the *Robucke* and *Eagle*, who, being somewhat asterne and steering nearer the shoare with intent to anchor, one upon the bowe of the Portugall admirall, and the other upon the bowe of the vice admirall, could not, notwithstanding all diligence used, come to doe anie service in halfe an houres space; and no sooner were wee within the levell range of our ordinance from them then that (not a breath of wind to bee felt and a current against us) wee were constrayned to anchor or drive further of. But our broadsides once brought up, the great ordinance from our whole fleete played so fast uppon them, that doubtlesse, if the knowledge in our people had beene answerable to their willing minds and readie resolutions, not one of these gallioúnes, unless their sides were impenetrable, had escaped us. About three of the clocke in the afternoone, unwilling after so hotte a dinner to receive the like supper, they cutte their cables and drove with the tide (then setting westerly) until they were without reach of our gunnes; and then their frigatts came to them and towed them awaie wonderfullie mangled and torne; for their admirall in the greattest furie of the fight was inforced to heeld his shippe to stoppe his leakes, his mainetopmast overbord and the head of his mainemast. The greatter Flemming both his topmasts and part of his bowspritt shotte awaie.

[1] *The English Factories in India*, 1618–21, pp. 223–24.

The lesser Flemming never a shrowde standing, never a topmast."

Thus ended the fight, in which the losses on the English side were small in number but included the gallant Captain Shilling. Each time I land at Jask I wonder whether a monument will ever be erected to celebrate this victory, which would recall the prowess of our ancestors and serve as an inspiration to their descendants. The merchants, after this decisive action, returned to business, took in five hundred and twenty bales of silk, and went back to Surat.

The Capture of Hormuz by an Anglo-Persian Expedition, A.D. 1622.—At the end of 1621 the English squadron of five ships and four pinnaces upon reaching Jask received orders to proceed to Kuhistak, a port some forty miles south of Minab. There the two captains in command found the factors and were informed that the position of affairs was critical.

Hostilities had recently broken out between the Persians and the Portuguese, and the latter had been sacking the ports, which the former were totally unable to defend. On the other hand, a Persian army had established itself in Kishm and was besieging the Portuguese fort; but it was out of the question for the Persians to attack Hormuz unless the English could be induced to co-operate. Imam Kuli Khan, son of Allah Verdi Khan, who conducted the operations as Governor of Fars, showed a good deal of political acumen. He held out promises of reward, combined with a hint that, should the factors refuse to co-operate in a war which had been mainly provoked on account of the privileges granted to the English, these privileges would be cancelled, and the silk that was in transit would be confiscated.

The question was debated at considerable length. There was peace in Europe between the Courts of England and Portugal, represented by Spain, although in Eastern waters the two powers had always fought one another. The Directors of the Company, who would have to bear the brunt if King James should think it advisable to make a scapegoat, would almost certainly disapprove

of the whole business. On the other hand, the merchants were most unwilling to sacrifice the trade so painfully started, and they were Englishmen of the period, ready to take great risks.

In the end they agreed to co-operate, and the following terms were quickly arranged with Imam Kuli Khan :—(*a*) An equal division of spoils ; (*b*) an equal division of customs dues when Hormuz was taken ; the English to be free of all duties in perpetuity ; (*c*) the Christian prisoners to be handed over to the English and the Moslems to the Persians ; and (*d*) the Persians to pay half the expenses of the fleet for supplies. These preliminaries having been arranged, the seamen had to be won over. At first they refused, "alleaging it was no merchandizing business, nor were they hired for any such exploit." However, by a mixture of threats and promises this difficulty was overcome, and in January 1622 the squadron put to sea.

The captains first made for Hormuz, hoping that the Portuguese fleet would accept the challenge, but when it was evident that the enemy had no intention of taking it up they sailed for Kishm, some fifteen miles away. There they found Ruy Freire, who had previously fought them, in command. After futile negotiations the fort was bombarded, but with little effect. A battery of five guns was then set up on land. The artillery practice was remarkable, a gun on the wall of the fort being dismounted at the first shot ; a breach was effected and the Portuguese surrendered. The casualties were trifling, but among the killed was William Baffin, of Arctic fame. To quote from *Purchas, his Pilgrimes* : "Master Baffin went on shoare with his Geometricall Instruments, for the taking the height and distance of the castle wall ; but as he was about the same, he received a small shot from the Castle into his belly, wherewith he gave three leapes, by report, and died immediately." [1]

After this success, which must have raised the spirits of the allies, the expedition anchored off Hormuz. The Persians immediately landed a large force which took

[1] Vol. ii. p. 1792.

possession of the town, and it was agreed that they should attack from the land side. From the sea and from a land battery the English bombarded simultaneously the castle and the fleet, but the latter did not attempt to show fight. The largest Portuguese galleon, the *San Pedro*, was set on fire first, and then one by one the other ships were destroyed. The Persians, on their side, succeeded in blowing up part of the wall; but their assault, although delivered with much gallantry, was repulsed with loss. Nevertheless, the situation of the garrison was desperate, and as the result of negotiations the fort was surrendered to the English. Five years after this feat of arms Sir Thomas Herbert visited Hormuz and wrote of the fort: "And both within and without the Castle so regularly built and so well fortified with deep trenches, counterscarp, and great Ordnance commanding both City and Haven, that none exceeded it through all the Orient."[1]

Thus fell the famous castle of Hormuz, by means of which the Portuguese for more than a century had held at their mercy the trade between India and Europe by the Persian Gulf. Portugal was thrown back on Maskat, but from that base remained still so formidable that the English squadron was forced to keep with the Dutch for mutual protection; in 1624 the allied fleets fought an indecisive action against the Portuguese.

In 1625 the squadron from England was attacked by Botelho, the new Portuguese commander. The *Lion* was boarded, but the assailants were blown up, and the ship made for Bandar Abbas, then more generally called Gombroon.[2] There Ruy Freire attacked and succeeded in burning the English ship. The crew fell into the hands of the enemy and were ruthlessly massacred, one man alone being spared.

Gradually, however, the power of the Portuguese waned, an expedition which was fitted out in 1630 with a view to the recapture of Hormuz being a failure. Maskat

[1] *Some Years' Travels, etc.*, p. 106; his account of Hormuz and of the siege is well worth reading.

[2] This ill-sounding word is a corruption of the Turkish *Gumruk* or Custom-house, itself a corruption of the Greek *κουμερι*, akin to the English word "commerce."

was captured by the Imam of Oman in 1651,[1] and no great while after the capture of Hormuz only deserted forts and the word *portugale*, the name by which a sweet orange is known in Persia, were left to mark the splendid position gained by the valour of D'Albuquerque and lost by the incapacity of his successors. For the English the taking of Hormuz was the most important event which had occurred since their appearance in the East, and their power and prestige must have risen to great heights when the news reached India. In Persia, too, they must have acquired credit; for although the commander of the Shah's troops would doubtless minimize the part played by our countrymen, whose losses were trifling compared with his own, without doubt Abbas fully realized that he could not have seized Hormuz without English help. When, in A.D. 1635, the British made peace with Portugal in the East—a peace which has never since been broken—the Persians were much alarmed on account of Hormuz, a fact which sufficiently shows how important was the part played in those Eastern waters by our fighting ancestors.

The Dutch.—Two years after the grant of the British East India Company's charter, rival Dutch efforts were amalgamated into a single company, and in the course of the next twenty years the newcomers had won their way to a leading position, mainly at the expense of Portugal, whose chief possessions they seized. A Dutch factory seems to have been established at Hormuz the year after its capture by the Anglo-Persian expedition;[2] it was subsequently moved to Bandar Abbas, where the massive building still remains and serves as the residence of the Persian Governor. In 1652, and again in 1666, Dutch missions visited Isfahan, and Chardin writes that at this period the Dutch were masters of the Persian trade, the English occupying the second place. Their success was due to their forcing the Persian Government to allow them to buy silk in any part of Persia and to export it without paying customs dues. This right was acquired in 1645,

[1] *Vide The Imams of Oman*, edited for Hakluyt Society by Rev. P. Badger, p. 81 ff.

[2] *Persia*, ii. p. 550. This section and the following are mainly based on Lord Curzon's work. Chardin's work, too, deserves study.



From a photograph by H. R. Sykes.

BANDAR ABBAS.

280a

and was finally claimed to be a monopoly for the export of silk from Persia. The civil war in England, which occurred at this period, naturally reacted unfavourably on the English position in Persia, where Shah Abbas and his nobles resented deeply the execution of Charles I. In the eighteenth century the situation changed: Holland, which had sacrificed everything to a monopoly of the spice trade, lost nearly all her colonial possessions in Asia to Great Britain, and her flag finally disappeared from the Persian Gulf.

The French.—France was the latest power to approach Persia from the south. She effected little until 1664, when Colbert, the great minister who strove so hard to expand the foreign relations of his country, despatched an embassy to Shah Abbas II. This mission had a friendly reception, although it was felt that Persia had been slighted because the envoys were not men of higher rank. Trading rights similar to those conceded to other nations and immunity from taxation and customs for three years were granted in a *farman*, and upon the strength of these privileges factories were established at Isfahan and at Bandar Abbas. In 1708 Louis XIV. concluded a treaty with Shah Sultan Husayn, and the French traded with Persia until the Afghan invasion, after which they withdrew. During the reign of Karim Khan the island of Kharak was ceded to the French; but it was never occupied, the French East India Company being at that period suppressed. Finally, during the short-lived period of French ascendancy at the Court of Fath Ali Shah in 1807-8 Kharak was again ceded, but with the expulsion of the French embassy from Persia in 1809 this cession was annulled.

The Embassy of Sir Dodmore Cotton to Shah Abbas, A.D. 1627.—Among the far-reaching results of the capture of Hormuz by the two allies was the change it brought about in the commercial policy of Persia. As already mentioned, the Shah was mainly interested in the silk trade, and although Sir Robert Sherley had failed in his first mission to arrange for the export of the commodity *via* Hormuz, the Persian monarch by no means gave up the project. The expulsion of the Portuguese from the

island emporium changed the whole situation. Two years later the appearance of Sir Robert Sherley on his second embassy, with a splendid retinue and in the enjoyment of a large pension, made a great impression in England. Although his exaggerated account of the wealth of Persia was discounted, a return mission was decided upon, and Sir Dodmore Cotton was sent, accompanied by Sherley and the scholarly Herbert. The mission landed at Gombroon, "whereupon the Cannons from the Castle and Cittadel vomited out their choler, ten times roaring out their wrathful clamours." The route followed by practically all the English travellers at this period lay through Lar and Shiraz, where the present Bushire-Isfahan main route was struck. The monarch was not at his capital, and the envoys travelled on northwards to Ashraff in the province of Mazanderan, where they were received in audience.

After passing through various apartments in which gold plate was lavishly exhibited, the ambassadors were received by Shah Abbas. Sir Dodmore Cotton stated that he had made a very great journey to congratulate the monarch on his success against their common enemy the Turks; also to promote trade and to make a perpetual league of friendship between England and Persia, and finally to see Sir Robert Sherley vindicate himself from the imputations of Nakd Ali Beg. The Shah, like a true son of Iran, replied that the Turks were a mean people and of no consequence, as was proved by his many victories over them. Nevertheless, he wished for unity among the Christian princes, as the Turkish conquests were due to their discord. As for trade, he was ready to deliver ten thousand bales every January at Gombroon, and would accept English cloth of equal value in exchange, so as to avoid being forced to export his silk through Turkey. Towards Sir Robert Sherley he expressed most friendly sentiments. Finally he drank the King of England's health in a bowl of wine, and, noting that the ambassador uncovered his head, he lifted up his turban.

This reception was most satisfactory; but owing to intrigues against Sir Robert Sherley, with whose private



THE PALACE AT ASHRAFF.

(From Xavier Hommaire de Hell's *Voyage en Turque et en Perse.*)

282a

interests the mission, owing to the instructions of King James, was far too deeply involved, matters here terminated. The ambassador was practically ignored by the great nobles, no other audience was granted, and after reaching Kazvin both Sir Dodmore Cotton and Sir Robert Sherley died.

Thus ended in gloom the second[1] embassy to Persia, the ambassador being buried in "a Dormitory amongst the Armenian graves; who also with their priests and people very civilly assisted the ceremony." Though a partial failure, the mission undoubtedly increased English interest in Persia. As an indication of this it is worth noting that Charles I., a staunch patron of learning, requested the East India Company to procure him some Persian manuscripts.

The Fortunes of the British.—By way of conclusion to this chapter, a word may be said of British fortunes under the later Safavi monarchs. Safi I. stipulated for an annual gift of £1500 and for the purchase annually of £60,000 worth of his silk. This was to be paid for in goods to the extent of two-thirds, and in money to the extent of one-third. Almost from the start the Persians had failed to pay over to the British the stipulated share of the customs receipts of Bandar Abbas. There were constant complaints on this subject, and as the years passed the Persians, who thought the English made a very good thing out of the privileges they enjoyed, declined to reconsider the question. The amalgamation of the old and new East India Companies in 1708 put an end to internal friction, and the position of the factory remained strong and prosperous until the Afghan invasion.

[1] The first embassy to Arghun in 1291 is referred to in Chapter LVII.

اصفهان نصف جهان

CHAPTER LXV

ARCHITECTURE AND ART UNDER THE SAFAVI DYNASTY

Isfahan is half the world.—*Persian Proverb.*

Isfahan, the Safavi Capital.—The masterpieces of Persian architecture under the Safavi monarchs are mostly to be found at Isfahan, and I therefore propose to describe the Safavi capital and some of its chief buildings which I have examined.[1] To do so is to describe the golden prime of medieval Persian architecture, which still serves as a model to-day, except in the cities of the north where Russian-designed houses have been adopted by the imitative sons of Iran.

The Royal Square.—Isfahan is situated on the left or north bank of the Zenda Rud, on a level fertile piece of land, and at its zenith may have had a population of three hundred thousand inhabitants. Its heart was the Maydan-i-Shah, or "Royal Square," enclosed by long ranges of double-storied buildings; Herbert declared it to be "as spacious, as pleasant and aromatick a Market as any in the Universe." The dimensions of the Maydan are 560 yards by 174 yards, and, as it was the royal polo ground, these measurements are of some interest.[2] The game of polo reached the height of its popularity at the period we have now reached, and matches are described by both Sherley and Chardin.[3] The marble goal-posts

[1] In addition to my own notes, I have consulted Curzon's *Persia* and Coste's *Monuments modernes de la Perse*; also the article on Persian Art in *Encyclop. of Religion and Ethics*, ed. by James Hastings.

[2] The present measurements of a polo ground are 300 by 200 yards.

[3] *Vide Ten Thousand Miles, etc.*, p. 342, where I have collected the accounts of these travellers.

are still standing, and many years ago, the morning after my arrival at Isfahan, I rose very early and knocked a polo ball between the posts, the first time such a thing had been done for perhaps two centuries. By this act I paid homage to a glorious past and expressed my gratitude to Persia for a game which is unequalled.

The Royal Mosque.—Overlooking the imposing parallelogram is the Masjid-i-Shah, or "Royal Mosque," one of the finest existing examples of Persian architecture. To quote the masterly description by Lord Curzon :—"A lofty archway framed in a recess, embellished with interior honeycomb groining in enamelled faience, surrounded by tile inscriptions from the Koran, and flanked by two minarets with spiral bands of similar ornamentation, leads from the Maydan through a porch, containing a great vase or font of porphyry, into the inner court. Here the peculiar construction of the Mosque, already visible from the exterior, is fully apparent. The axis of the Maydan being almost due north and south, the architect required to incline the axis of the mosque considerably to the south-west, in order that the *mihrab* or prayer-niche might be turned in the direction of Mecca. This purpose was effected by architectural means that are at once grandiose and simple. The inner court, marble-paved and containing a great tank for ablutions in the centre, is surrounded by a two-storeyed arcade, undecorated save by bands of Kufic inscriptions in tile-work, white letters upon a blue ground. The arches are kept for the accommodation of priests and attendants. On either side rises a lofty tile-faced *aywan*, a mighty arch in which opens access to a space covered by a low dome. Opposite the entrance a third *aywan*, flanked by minarets, conducts into the mosque proper, which is surmounted by the principal cupola, whose exterior, covered with exquisite tiles containing patterns in dark blue and green arabesque on an azure ground, is one of the principal land-marks in the city. On either side of the shrine are further courts, with basins and porticoes, to which the public are admitted on Fridays. The decorative treatment of this beautiful building, though falling, like all other works of art in

Persia, into decay, yet remains a superb sample of the style of the Safavi kings."

The Ala Kapi.—On the east side of the Maydan is situated the Ala Kapi, or "Lofty Gate," by which the royal palace was entered. It may more correctly be described as a building in the form of a great arch on which was constructed a *talar*, or open throne-room, supported by the wooden columns which form a distinctive feature of Safavi architecture. Enthroned in state, the Shah gave audience at the *No Ruz*, or New Year, in this hall, which is declared by Chardin to be "le plus beau Sallon de cette sorte que j'aye vû au monde." His Majesty also witnessed polo matches, horse races and wild beast combats from this same building, in which he was visible to thousands of his subjects who filled the great square.

The Chehel Sutun.—The Ala Kapi leads into the vast gardens, in which were many palaces. The most important building is the Chehel Sutun, or "Forty Columns."[1] This splendid throne-room, with its roof constructed of the boles of great plane trees and supported by twenty columns made of the same tree, was formerly wainscoted with white marble, surmounted by mirror-work set in facets. Behind this verandah is the actual throne-room, from which opened a dais supporting the throne. Small rooms on either side were destined for the ministers and for service, and behind, extending the entire length of the building, is a long gallery with three immense oil-paintings on each side, three of which are reproduced in this work. To quote again from Lord Curzon, "they transport us straight to the court of the lordly Abbas and his predecessors or successors on the throne. We see the king engaged in combat, or at some royal festivity, enjoying the pleasures of the bowl. The big moustaches and smooth chins, and abundant turbans, represent a fashion of coiffure that has long expired. The arms and accoutrements of the warriors, the instruments of the musicians, the very gestures of the dancing-girls, open to

[1] The number "Forty" is not intended to be taken literally, any more than in the case of Persepolis, which also has for one of its names the "Forty Columns."



SHAH TAHMASP ENTERTAINING ABDUL MOHAMED, KHAN OF THE UZBEGS.

(From a wall painting in the Chehel Sutun, copied by Texier.)

286a



Flandin and Coste.

THE MASJID-I-SHAH, ISFAHAN.

286b

us the locked doors of the past; and we seem to share in the feasts and fights, in the pomp and dalliance of the Safavi kings." We learn from the pages of Krusinski that the original building described by Chardin was destroyed by fire, and that we owe the present edifice to Shah Sultan Husayn.[1]

The Chahar Bagh.—Such were the chief buildings in the centre of the city, and we now pass to the Chahar Bagh, or "Four Gardens,"[2] with a splendid double avenue of oriental planes one hundred and fifty feet wide, which is entered by a fine gateway. Water ran down the centre in stone channels and collected in basins at the cross roads, and on each side tiled gateways led to the gardens of the great nobles of the Court. To quote the ornate description by Dr. Fryer,[3] "all the pride of Spahaun was met in the Chaurbaug, and the Grandees were Airing themselves, prancing about with their numerous Trains, striving to outvie each other in Pomp and Generosity. . . . In the Garden itself, variety of Green Trees flourishing, sweet Odors smelling, clear Fountains and Rivers flowing, charm all the senses; nor is there less surprizal at the ravishing Sight of the delicate Summer-houses by each Pond's side, built with all the advantages for Recreation and Delight."

The Madrasa-i-Shah Husayn.—Situated off the Chahar Bagh is a magnificent *madrasa*, or college, which impressed me deeply. Beyond a recessed archway, with decoration of the effective honeycomb pattern, a covered vestibule leads into the main court. Here a combination of shade, water and flowers enhances the beauty of the building, the chief features of which are the exquisite tiles, rising above a wainscoting of marble, and the lovely stencilling. As the illustration proves, Coste has done full justice to this stately pile.

The Bridge of Allah Verdi Khan.—The noble avenue of the Chahar Bagh leads to the bridge of Allah Verdi

[1] Trans. by Du Cerceau, i. p. 126.

[2] The avenue was built on the site of four vineyards. Persians are very fond of building four gardens and dividing each garden into four divisions.

[3] *East India and Persia*, ed. for the Hakluyt Society by Crooke. Fryer's account of Isfahan is well worth reading.

Khan, which even in decay must rank among the great bridges of the world. Approached by a paved causeway, it is entered through the usual gateway. The extraordinary feature of the bridge, which is 388 yards in length, with a paved roadway 30 feet wide, is that there are three distinct thoroughfares, at three separate levels. One of these is the roadway, on each side of which runs a covered arcade, opening by arches into the main road on one side and on to the river on the other. Here and there this arcade, or gallery, leads past chambers that were originally adorned with paintings. Above this main road, on the summit of the bridge, is a footway reached by steps, and below it a lower storey, to which similar steps descend. Here, just above the river-bed, a passage runs the entire length of the bridge. The only adverse criticism to be made is one which will be appreciated from the illustration, namely, that the bridge at most seasons of the year is a structure too fine for the exiguous stream of the Zenda Rud.

Tiles.—The practice of covering buildings with tiles reached its zenith under the Safavi rulers, and this therefore is a convenient place for a few remarks on the famous products of the Persian kilns. Ceramics certainly played an important part in Achaemenian architecture, and the Frieze of the Archers at Susa, mentioned in Chapter XV., is a superb example of the tiles of the period. But the art apparently disappeared, if, indeed, it was at that time practised on the Iranian plateau, which is doubtful; therefore for our present purpose the tiles of the Achaemenian period may be disregarded.

In the first rank is the *faience à reflet*, or lustred tiles. There is much doubt about the original home of these products, of which the oldest dated pieces, bearing dates A.D. 864–75, are stated to be in Tunis.[1] In A.D. 1035 the celebrated Nasiri Khusru gives an interesting account of lustre ware, which apparently did not at that period exist in Iran: but, wherever the art came into being, it is in Persia that it attained a beauty which stamps it for all time as the noblest creation of the potter. What has

[1] *Vide* "The Godman Collection" in the *Connoisseur* for September 1903.



Flandin and Coste.

THE CHAHAR BAGH AT ISFAHAN.

288a

added to the interest of the lustre tile is the fact that it represents a lost art. It is known indeed that the soft paste was covered with an opaque glaze, generally white or blue, and then baked. As a second process alloys of gold, silver, copper and other metals were painted, and the tile was baked again. These alloys produced colours ranging from gold to ruby red and from turquoise blue to brown ; and no experiments have succeeded in successfully imitating the superb beauty of the Persian ceramics. The finest specimen of lustre in my possession consists of a tile measuring 24 inches by 18½ inches. The ground is brown and on it are sapphire blue letters an inch wide, standing up half an inch in relief and with turquoise blue conventional leaves. Unfortunately, although many large fragments of these tiles were brought to me, it was impossible to fit them together into a complete specimen, but even in its imperfect condition its beauty is great.

The tiles without lustre which were manufactured under the Timurids, and again under the Safavis, are also very beautiful. Every colour is used, but the scroll-work is so artistic and the mixture of the colours so perfect that an effect is produced of deep richness, which is enhanced when the tiles are seen on some stately quadrangle or portico, with the cloudless blue of the Persian sky as a background. Here again it is very difficult to trace the artistic influences at work in the production of the tiles ; but there is no doubt that Chinese art, which was introduced by the Mongols, powerfully affected the impressionable Persian in tile-making as it did also in painting, although Persian art never lost its marked individuality in colour, shape and design.

Pottery.—Not only in tiles, but in pottery also, the Persian artists achieved great beauty of shape, design and colour. Here, too, Chinese influence may be observed, and it is interesting to learn from Chardin that the Dutch sold " the porcelain of Meshed and Kerman " to customers in Europe, pretending that it came from China. Perhaps the finest Persian pottery is the imitation Celadon ware, in which Chinese designs are copied, but associated with Persian characteristics. The Persian ware, which is white

and translucent, has a beauty of its own, and perhaps surpasses its model in freedom and boldness of design. Even comparatively modern Persian basins and plates of a creamy white paste with coloured floral decoration are distinctly attractive and are beginning to be noticed by the collector.

Carpets.—The carpets of Persia form an almost inexhaustible theme, and although numerous works have appeared on this subject a really good book still remains to be written. The antiquity of the carpet is great, references to it dating back to the third millennium B.C., and Sir George Birdwood[1] is of opinion that there has been "no material modification in the artistic and technical character" since the earliest description of these fabrics. It must, however, be noted that the imposition of Islam on Persia affected their designs, which fall into two classes: (*a*) Those expressing the Shia spirit in animals, trees, blossoms, flowers, with free graceful scrolls, conventional arabesques and cartouches enclosing inscriptions; and (*b*) those in which the design, reflecting the Sunni austerity, is limited to geometrical and angular forms, such as the Turkoman carpets with their *bazuband*[2] or "armlet" patterns.

To this spirit we mainly owe the wonderful development in Persia of floral and geometrical designs and of arabesques on which the patterns of our curtains, of our wall-papers, of our carpets, and of many other articles are based in England to-day. To quote Birdwood, "the new and severely conventionalised floral type, applied either as a diaper, or in the 'Tree of Life' and 'Knop and Flower' patterns, gradually prevailed; and as modified in the freer drawing and more natural delineations of the Italianesque Abbasi carpets, it characterises the predominant denominations of Persian carpets."

Under the Sasanian dynasty Persian fabrics known as Susancherd were highly prized in the West, and when Ctesiphon was captured by Sad, among the loot was a

[1] "The Antiquity of Oriental Carpets," *Journal Royal Socy. of Arts* for November 1908.

[2] A *bazuband* is generally an octagonal metal box containing a portion of the Koran; it is worn to afford protection.





A PERSIAN GARDEN CARPET





silk carpet, 60 ells long. The design represented was a *firdaus*, or garden, with running streams marked out by crystals, the ground in gold thread, the leaves worked in silk and the blossoms represented by precious stones.

The tradition of this marvellous carpet, which was probably not the only specimen made, was never lost, and an example believed to have been woven for Shah Abbas has been preserved. Of this I am able to give an illustration, which deserves careful examination. The carpet, woven in wool, is divided into the four customary plots by the main stream of water, crossed by a smaller stream. To quote from Mrs. Villiers Stuart, "the characteristic canals, the special feature of the type, are unequal in length, but their form is only a modification of the older cosmic cross. The central pavilion is very small, little more than a fountain basin, in which four birds swim, a curious mixture of swan and royal peacock. The carpet shows the old symbolic avenues of cypress and flowering fruit-trees with their mystic birds beak to beak and tulip border close to the stream. Four large plane trees are planted at the angles of the pavilions forming an outer avenue, and trees fill the squares at the corners of the central tank."[1]

It is impossible to write, however briefly, about Persian carpets without a reference to the exquisite 40-foot carpet from the Shrine of Ardebil, which, as the inscription proves, was woven in the reign of Shah Tahmasp, in A.H. 946 (1540). Thanks to English patriotism it was bought for the nation and is now one of the most prized treasures of the Victoria and Albert Museum. The ground is of dark blue, the medallions are yellow and the cartouches and borders are red. From the great central group of medallions lamps depend, and the tracery is so rich and so natural that the carpet resembles a beautiful picture.

One of the most convincing proofs of Persian genius in carpets is the remarkable variety of design, every

[1] *Gardens of the Great Mughals*, p. 149, by C. M. Villiers Stuart, a most charming work.

nomad tribe weaving a separate pattern; while there is an enormous difference between the bright joyousness of the carpets of Kerman, displaying Shia tendencies, and the sombre, but infinitely rich, colours of the austere Sunni Turkoman fabrics. Both are treasures to the collector, and so also are good specimens of the rugs all over Persia, from Kurdistan on the west to Khorasan on the east. It is perhaps worth mentioning that the irregularities in colour or design are introduced for the purpose of averting the evil eye; that beasts and flowers alike have their emblematical or symbolical meaning; that the "Tree of Life" has survived from Sumerian to modern times; and that what is believed to be a Chinese seal is now incorporated in the border of many Turkoman carpets.

In addition to carpets there is the *namad*, or felt, manufactured by rolling wool into a solid mass. The finest specimens made at Kerman are of a fawn colour, and, weighing less than a carpet, are on that account valued by travellers; the coarser quality is used as a heavy horse covering in winter. Neither of these varieties is exported.

The shawls of Persia with their embroideries are highly prized in the East. The European prefers rich embroidery, the needlework praised by Marco Polo, who wrote: "The ladies of the country and their daughters also produce exquisite needlework in the embroidery of silk stuffs in different colours, with figures of beasts, trees, and flowers and a variety of other patterns. They work hangings for the use of noblemen so deftly that they are marvels to see, as well as cushions, pillows, quilts, and all sorts of things."

The embossed brocades are very beautiful and so are the ancient velvets of Kashan; and it is sad to know that Persian ladies despise their own exquisite fabrics and prefer the inferior products of European looms. It is in patterns as well as in quality that the Persians were supreme, and there is very little in the old art, from the stamped calico of Isfahan to the embroidered saddle-cloths of Resht, which is not appreciated by the European and



Eugene Flandin.

BRIDGE OF ALLAH VERDI KHAN.

292a

American collector. Nor was the fame of Persian stuffs and colours unknown in medieval Europe, light blue material being termed "pers" in English, as in other languages of the day.

Painting.—By Moslem rule the human figure cannot be represented in art. Fortunately this was subject to exceptions, and descriptions are extant of pictures painted in the schools of Damascus, Baghdad and Cairo, in which such figures appear. Few of the works of these artists have survived, but the Austrian traveller Musil discovered in the Syrian desert figure paintings of the eighth century. The most important is a large picture in which the Byzantine Emperor, the Caliph and the Chosroes are pourtrayed; other figures of the ninth century have been found at Samarra. The frescoes discovered by Stein at Khotan may also be studied.[1]

Among the earliest dated miniature paintings—and in Persian art pictures on a small scale are the best—is a work of the Abbasid school from Baghdad, the date of which, A.D. 1222, is beyond dispute. It shows strongly the influence of Byzantine art. But this art was soon almost forgotten, and shortly afterwards Chinese influence became equally strong, only to be shaken off in its turn. The sack of Baghdad by Hulagu in A.D. 1258 is believed to have dealt the death-blow to Arab art based on old tradition, and at the same time to have given birth to true Persian art. This at first was Persian Mongolian, still showing traces of Byzantine influence. Its promise was great, greater indeed than its accomplishment, for the overpowering desire for material beauty mastered all idea of dramatic pourtrayal.

At the end of the fourteenth century, by which time Tamerlane had conquered Persia, the art had reached its zenith. There is a perfect equilibrium between drawing and colour, but the appeal is made by the artist to the eye, and to the eye alone; in other words, the soul is wanting. The general impression is that of a scene pourtrayed with a mass of colours, skilfully blended to

[1] I have consulted Dr. Martin's *Miniature Paintings and Painters of Persia, etc.*; also Gayet's *L'Art persan*. I have to thank Dr. Dietz, of the University of Vienna, for the note on Musil's discovery.

produce an effect of great richness. The border is frequently composed of verses most artistically woven into the picture; and here it may be noted that the Persian painter is also frequently a calligraphist, and that no other people are so skilled in using the alphabet for decorative purposes. The failure would appear to be that the figures never tell their own story from the expression, but resemble waxen figures set in exquisite surroundings. Nature is not studied for its own beauty, but in order to explain the subject of the picture, and to act as a sympathetic and illustrative background.

The themes of the Persian artist are few in number and are generally confined to well-known events such as the meeting between Khusru and Shirin, and Majnun and Layla. During the Safavi period European figures were introduced. Religious subjects were rarely attempted. The Persian painter groups badly, but draws well. His figures are less important than the accessories, such as clothes, jewelry and weapons, which are reproduced with infinite pains. The colouring is excellent and the results are distinctly pleasing, although apt to strike the European as unfamiliar and at times as bordering on the grotesque.[1]

Metal Work.—The genius of Persia, so strongly expressed in ceramics and textiles, was equally visible in metal work of every kind. In shape, and above all in decoration, the Persian metal worker was unsurpassed, and his armour and swords enjoyed a wide reputation. To this Marco Polo testifies: "They are very skilful in making harness of war; their saddles, bridles, spurs, swords, bows, quivers, and arms of every kind are very well made." Vessels of all sorts abound, from the drinking-cup of the poor man to the great cauldron of the rich, and in them all there is a beauty of form and design which is most attractive. Of modern art, the gold and silver filigree work of Zenjan and the *Khatamkari*, or mosaics, of Shiraz are worthy of attention; nor can the carved spoons of Abadeh be omitted from any list, however brief.

[1] These remarks are based on the review of Martin's work in *The Times*.

294a



Pascal Coste.

COLLEGE OF SHAH SULTAN HUSAYN, ISFAHAN.

The examples of Persian art which can be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum and elsewhere prove that, although Persia adopted much, she invariably improved on her models; and as the years pass the work of her old artists and craftsmen is becoming more and more appreciated in the great centres of the West.




Shah Husayn.

CHAPTER LXVI

THE DECLINE OF THE SAFAVI DYNASTY

Un Aide des Cérémonies conduisit l'Ambassadeur. Il le fit descendre de cheval à cent pas environ du grand Portail et le mena fort vite au Sallon où étoit le Roi. Le Capitaine de la porte le prit là, et le conduisit *au baiser des pieds du Roi.* Ce Salut se fait en cette sorte. On mène l'Ambassadeur à quatre pas du Roi vis-à-vis de lui, où on l'arrête, et on le met à genoux, et on lui fait faire trois fois un prosternement du corps et de la tête en terre, si bas, que le front y touche. L'Ambassadeur se relève après, et délivre la lettre qu'il a pour le Roi au Capitaine de la porte qui la met dans les mains du Roi, et le Roi la met à côté droit sans la regarder. On mène ensuite l'Ambassadeur à la place qui lui est destinée.—Chardin, iii. 221.

The Cause of the Decline.—Few dynasties have lived so long and so successfully upon their reputation as did that of the Safavis after the death of Shah Abbas. To some extent their great monarch must be held responsible for the degeneracy of his successors, since by his orders they were brought up in the *anderun* among eunuchs and women, and not trained to arms, as had been invariably the custom until it was altered by the imperious old man. It is obvious that by this change he hoped to avoid the risk of being killed by a capable member of his own family, and he either failed to realize, or was indifferent to, the inevitable results of the new system.

The policy succeeded only too well, and throughout a second century, during which the dynasty continued to rule Persia, there was no able monarch to sit on the throne of his ancestors. Yet, owing to the reverence

felt for the sacred house, its rule was accepted by the people until the virility of the nation itself was corrupted. Then an awful penalty had to be paid in blood and shame for neglect of all the precautions by which the existence of states is preserved.

Shah Safi, A.H. 1038–1052 (1629–1642).—Shah Abbas, when dying, ordered that Sam *Mirza*, son of the unfortunate Safi *Mirza*, should be proclaimed his successor. The new monarch took the title of Shah Safi, and his reign of thirteen years was one long chapter of executions. He murdered the princes of the blood royal, and even some of the princesses, and, not content with thus securing his power, deliberately put to death all his grandfather's most trusted councillors and generals. Among his victims was Imam Kuli Khan, the conqueror of Hormuz. We learn from Tavernier and Olearius, who with Chardin constitute our chief authorities for the period, that the great noble was warned not to venture to court, but relying on his long years of faithful service he obeyed the summons and was put to death. His sons shared his fate, lest they should avenge his death when they grew up.

The Holstein Embassy, 1637.—The pioneer efforts of Jenkinson to trade with Persia across Russia ended in failure, as recorded in Chapter LXII. A fresh effort was made in the seventeenth century from a new quarter, but by the same route. The silk manufactures of Holstein were considerable and, the raw silk of Persia attracting the attention of its merchants, the Duke decided to despatch Brucman, a Hamburg merchant who had originated the scheme, on an embassy to the Shah.

The mission made disadvantageous arrangements with the Grand Duke of Muscovy for free transit, and upon arriving in Persia found that the freight and customs charges would eat up all the profits. Brucman, to avoid returning empty-handed, then tried to negotiate an alliance against Turkey. The failure and blunders which cost him his life are recorded in the work of Adam Olearius,[1] who was the secretary of the mission. The

[1] *Relation de voyage*, Paris, 1639.

negative results were perhaps of some value, as it was proved once more that owing to bad and dangerous communications and the great distance the trade would not be profitable.

The Uzbegs.—At the very end of the sixteenth century there was a change in the dynasty of the Uzbegs. When the Russians absorbed the Khanate of Astrakhan, the dispossessed chief took refuge at Bokhara, where he was warmly welcomed by Iskandar, the last monarch of the Shaybanid dynasty. Jani Khan, son of the refugee prince, married the daughter of Iskandar, and after the murder of the latter was offered the throne; he, however, declined it in favour of his son, who founded the Astrakhan dynasty, which lasted until the end of the eighteenth century. The relations of Bokhara with Persia were unchanged, invasions by the Uzbegs into Khorasan being undertaken with varying success. In A.H. 1017 (1608) a great sovereign appeared in the person of Imam Kuli, who seized the throne, and during his reign of thirty-eight years Bokhara recovered some part of her ancient wealth and prosperity. His rule was not aggressive and only one raid into Khorasan is mentioned, which was repulsed by the generals of Shah Safi. But greater success was met with at Kandahar, where the Persian Governor evacuated the city upon the approach of the Uzbegs and, marching off with the garrison to Delhi, entered the service of the Moghul Emperor.

The Capture of Hamadan by the Turks, A.H. 1039 (1630).—During the reign of Shah Safi another of the almost constant wars with Turkey broke out. At this period the throne of Othman was occupied by Murad IV., the last fighting sultan, whose offensive policy was a serious menace to Persia. The first campaign was directed against Hamadan. The Turkish army marched to Mosul, where it was delayed by heavy rains. It then entered Kurdistan, defeated a Persian army, and in A.H. 1039 (1630) captured Hamadan.

The inhabitants of the ancient capital of Media were massacred and the city was sacked for six days, during which the buildings were destroyed and even the trees



MOSUL.

(View taken from bridge looking upstream.)

(From Wigrams' *Cradle of Mankind.*)

298a

were cut down. From the scene of this barbarous excess the army marched across the Zagros against Baghdad. This city was strongly held by a determined garrison, and although the bombardment levelled the walls, the assault which followed was repulsed, thousands of Turks being buried in the ruins. After this failure the Turkish army retreated on Mosul. In the following year a fresh campaign was attempted, but the disgrace of the Grand Vizier and a series of mutinies that followed gave Persia a much-needed respite.

The Erivan Campaign, A.H. 1045 (1635). — During the first twelve years of his reign Murad had never gone further than Adrianople in Europe and Brusa in Asia; he now took the field in person. His first campaign was directed against Erivan, which capitulated on terms in A.H. 1045 (1635). Tabriz, the next objective, was occupied without resistance. In spite of this it was deliberately destroyed, the Blue Mosque being saved only by the entreaties of the Mufti, who pointed out that it had been built by a Sunni. This concluded the season's operations, and the Sultan returned in triumph to Constantinople. Shah Safi had not dared to face the Turkish army, but upon its departure he besieged Erivan. The efforts made by the Turkish authorities to come to the aid of the garrison were futile, and after its surrender in the spring of 1636 the Shah returned to Isfahan.

The Capture of Baghdad, A.H. 1048 (1638).—Three years later Murad marched on Baghdad, moving, as in the former campaign, by way of Mosul. On the very day of his arrival the siege of Baghdad was begun. The Sultan shared the perils and hardships with his soldiers and under his personal supervision extraordinary energy was shown. Although the Grand Vizier was killed in leading an assault, the Turks were not to be denied, and on the fortieth day they regained possession of the city, fifteen years after its capture by the Persians. Murad offered terms to the garrison, but as the resistance was continued in isolated towers the Ottoman soldiery massacred them all. During the siege Shah Safi had appeared at Kasr-i-Shirin with 12,000 men, but this

force was too weak to effect anything of importance. Shortly afterwards peace was made on the terms of the actual position, Baghdad, which had been strongly garrisoned, being retained by Turkey and Erivan by Persia.

Abbas II., 1052–1077 (1642–1667).—Shah Safi was succeeded by his son Abbas II., a boy of ten, and for some years, under his Ministers, there was evidently a reaction to a more austere tone, wine-bibbing being regarded as a bar to office. But, as was to be expected, the young Shah when he attained his majority indulged in the vices of the period, and all European travellers without distinction were admitted to share his orgies. Apart from this, the country was apparently prosperous and happy, and Kandahar was recovered by an army led by the young Shah in person. Architecture flourished during his reign. To him we owe the stately quadrangle of the Sahn-i-Kuhna, or "Old Court," at Meshed, the portico of which is a particularly fine example of Safavi architecture combined with the potter's art.[1]

The Uzbeg Refugees.—In the time of Abbas II. an Uzbeg prince sought the protection of the Shah, and was treated with extraordinary generosity and honour. Later Nazir Mohamed, the Uzbeg monarch, threw himself on Persian hospitality, and met with similar disinterested kindness, an army being placed at his disposal to aid him in asserting his rights. There was, indeed, a certain chivalrous spirit in the Safavi monarchs, who never showed to greater advantage than in their treatment of refugees and foreign travellers.

The First Russian Embassy to Persia, A.D. 1664.—It is difficult to realize that Russia, whose frontiers are now conterminous with those of Persia from Ararat on the west to Kalat-i-Nadiri and Sarakhs on the east, had practically no relations with Iran until some two and a half centuries ago. The first recorded embassy was from the Emperor Alexis,[2] usually termed the Grand Duke

[1] *Vide* my "Historical Notes on Khorasan," *Journal R.A.S.* for October 1910, p. 1133.

[2] He was the father of Peter the Great, and curiously enough in this very year he received an embassy from Charles II. of England.



From a photograph by Athelstan Riley.

IN THE KURDISTAN MOUNTAINS.

300a

of Muscovy, and consisted of two envoys with 800 followers. With the habitual generous hospitality of the Safavis, the Muscovites were entertained in a splendid palace, but it soon transpired that they were really merchants who had been permitted to assume the rôle of ambassadors in order to evade the payment of the customs dues. Abbas was justly incensed at this duplicity, and the Muscovites were thereupon treated with contempt and dismissed without a formal reply. In revenge for this affront the Grand Duke instigated the Cossacks of Southern Russia to raid Mazanderan. At first they were successful and burned Farrahabad, the capital. They then entrenched themselves in the peninsula of Mián Kala, close to the present Russian naval station at Ashurada, but were driven out of their position. This raid was the first act of Russian aggression against Persia.[1]

Sulayman, A.H. 1077–1105 (1667–1694).—Safi, the eldest son of Abbas, was twenty years of age at the time of his father's death. Unwilling to accept a grown man as their sovereign, the Ministers pretended to believe that the young Prince, who had been kept immured in the *anderun*, had been blinded, and on this account proposed to enthrone his infant brother. The intrigue, however, was defeated by the loyalty of a eunuch, and Safi ascended the throne under the title of Sulayman.

The decline of the dynasty proceeded placidly under the new monarch, who was a voluptuary and unwarlike. The seizure of Kishm by the Dutch did not rouse him to action, nor was he disturbed by the Uzbeg inroads into Khorasan. Bad health in his later years confined him to his *anderun*, where he fell entirely under the influence of eunuchs and women; but even so the country appeared to remain tranquil and the dynasty enjoyed its Indian summer. Sulayman maintained the traditional splendour of the Safavi Court. Chardin gives a vivid description of the scene in the Maydan-i-Shah on a day of festival: "Le 16. Sur les huit heures du matin on vit la Place Royale arrosée de bout en bout, & ornée comme je vais le dire. A côté de la grand entrée du Palais Royal, à

[1] Chardin, *Coronation of King Solyman III.*, pp. 152-54.

vingt pas de distance, il y avoit douze Chevaux des plus beaux de l'écurie du Roi, six de chaque côté, couverts de harnois les plus superbes & magnifiques qu'on puisse voir au monde. Quatre harnois étoient d'Emeraudes, deux de Rubis, deux de pierres de couleur mêlées avec des Diamans, deux autres étoient d'Or émaillé & deux autres de fin Or lisse. . . . A trente pas des Chevaux, il y avoit des Bêtes farouches dressées à combattre contre des jeunes Taureaux. Deux Lions, un Tygre, et un Léopard, attachez, & chacun étendu sur un grand Tapis d'écarlate, la tête tournée vers le Palais."[1]

During his long reign Sulayman received many embassies, and among the most brilliant was one from France, whose ambassador termed himself "General and Ambassador from the Great King of Europe." He also continued the tradition of the family at Meshed, and repaired the golden dome which had been damaged by an earthquake, mentioned by Chardin. In commemoration of this pious deed an inscription may be read, dated A.H. 1086 (1676), in which he refers to himself as "The Reviver of the ancient ruins of his Ancestors."[2]

The Musalla, or "Place of Prayer," outside Meshed was also constructed in this reign. The main arch is decorated with a long quotation from the Koran in white letters on a blue background, and on each side near the ground are ten lines of an inscription with yellow letters on a blue ground.[3] The building is striking even in its decay.

The Accession of Shah Sultan Husayn, A.H. 1105 (1694).—It is stated that when Sulayman lay on his deathbed he said to his eunuch advisers, "If you wish for ease, elevate Husayn *Mirza*; if you desire the glory of Persia, Abbas *Mirza*." Needless to say, the former son was chosen, and upon his accession he proved a mixture of meekness and piety, qualities as much out of place as in the case of Edward the Confessor, his English prototype. He was also noted for his uxoriousness. The piety of Husayn, translated into action, placed *mullas* and eunuchs in the

[1] Vol. iii. p. 219.
[2] *Historical Notes, etc.*, p. 1137.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 1153.



From a photograph by the Author.

THE *MUSALLA* AT MESHED.

posts that should have been held by the great nobles, and the whole nation was thereby dangerously weakened. The right of sanctuary was extended to all colleges, whose occupants thus became entitled to protect murderers, a most dangerous privilege; and the monarch himself refused to order the death penalty. Peace was enjoyed; but, sunk in this, the nation did not realize that it was only the lull before the storm, and when the storm broke their leaders were not capable of coping with it.

The Embassies of Peter the Great, A.D. 1708 *and* 1715.—In A.H. 1120 (1708) Peter the Great despatched an embassy to the Court at Isfahan, headed by an Armenian named Israel Orii. This adventurer was accompanied by a train of 700 followers, many of whom were merchants who took advantage of the opportunity to escape customs dues. The size of the embassy and the aggressive character of the Tsar aroused much alarm at Isfahan, and a rumour was circulated that it was intended to seize Georgia and Armenia. The embassy, however, was received with all honour in spite of its semi-commercial character, Shah Husayn being unable to treat the envoys of Peter as his ancestor had treated those of Alexis. Seven years later another embassy reached Persia, under the talented Artemii Volinski, and, as will appear in a future chapter, Peter the Great was evidently paving the way for action of a distinctly aggressive character.

The Failure in the Persian Gulf.—In the Persian Gulf the position of Persia was unsatisfactory and weak. Sultan bin Sayf II., according to the Oman history, "made war on the enemy by sea and land and encountered the Persians in many places. . . . He also attacked and took al-Bahrein."[1] The Persians were helpless without a fleet, and appealed to the Portuguese, who agreed to render assistance. The Portuguese, however, were in a very different position from that which they occupied while Maskat was in their possession, and on attempting to sail up the Gulf they were attacked and defeated by the fleet

[1] *The Imams of Oman*, p. 93. Bahrein is the island in this case, and not the province.

of the Imam.[1] Consequently the Persian general, Lutf Ali Khan, a brother-in-law of Fatteh Ali Khan the Vizier, was obliged to adopt a purely defensive attitude, and to garrison Bandar Abbas and other ports against the raids from Oman, which became more and more serious as time went by.

[1] According to Krusinski, the Portuguese refused to transport the troops, owing to the non-payment of the sum of money agreed upon.



MAHMUD OF GHAZNI.

CHAPTER LXVII

THE GHILZAIS OF KANDAHAR

As a race the Ghilji mix little with their neighbours, and indeed differ in many respects, both as to internal government and domestic customs, from the other races of Afghanistan. . . . The pastoral clans are notoriously predatory in their habits.—BELLEW, *The Races of Afghanistan.*

A Sketch of Afghanistan.—By way of preface to this chapter, I propose to give a brief description of the country which, since the middle of the eighteenth century, has been known as the kingdom of Afghanistan.[1] Merk aptly points out that geographically Afghanistan is the Switzerland of Asia. In both countries there are great central masses from which secondary ranges radiate far and wide, and the Kuh-i-Baba to the north of Kabul may be compared with the St. Gothard. Both countries lie at the head of peninsulas stretching south, and both are isolated from the central continents to their north by high ranges extending far to the east and west. As geographers would point out, the physical similarity would make for political similarity.

Its Inhabitants.—Afghanistan, owing to its physical characteristics, has been the haven of refuge of aboriginal clans driven off the fertile plains. Moreover, being situated at the north-west gates of India, it has heard the tramp of armies from the invasion by Alexander the Great down through the centuries, until the doubling of

[1] The best general account of Afghanistan is the article by M. Longworth Dames in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam.* A good paper was recently read before the Central Asian Society by W. R. Merk. I have also referred to the contemporary *History of the late Revolutions in Persia* by Father Krusinski, which is of considerable value.

the Cape of Good Hope opened a way for western nations to invade India by its sea gates.

The dominant population of this interesting land is termed Pathan, or "Speakers of Pashtu,"[1] towards the borders of India, and in the west Afghan, or Aoghan, a word the derivation of which is obscure. Longworth Dames points out that Pathan is the real name, and that the term Afghan, first applied by foreigners, appears to be of literary origin ; it has now been adopted as a polite designation by the upper classes.

The two great tribes are the Durranis, the present ruling tribe, and the Ghilzais, or more correctly Ghalzais (termed Ghilji by Bellew), both of which are referred to below. These tribes may be roughly described as inhabiting eastern and southern Afghanistan respectively. To the north of the Hindu Kush the population is mainly Uzbeg ; the heart of the country is inhabited by Mongol Hazaras, Taimani and Chahar Aimak, and the Herat province by Aryan Tajiks, while east of Kabul, in Wakhan, Roshan, and above all Kafiristan, there is an ethnological collection of peoples of the greatest interest, consisting of ancient Aryan tribes and broken clans which have taken refuge in these inaccessible mountain valleys. The population, of perhaps five millions altogether, may be divided into two equal classes, of Afghan and non-Afghan elements. The Afghans themselves favour the theory that they are descended from scions of the royal house of Judah who were exiled to these distant mountains, but this is not believed by any serious student of the subject, and it is safer to accept the view that the foreign elements were numerous, and that the Afghans are racially of Aryan origin and link India to the east with Persia to the west. The Afghans and Uzbegs are Sunnis, whereas the Persian element and the Hazaras are Shias. Moreover, Pashtu being rather a dialect than a language, the written language and literature are Persian, which is spoken by all Afghans of consideration.

The Province of Kandahar.—Our attention is now

[1] Pashtu or Pakhtu is the name of the *language*. The *people* are called Pashtūn or Pakhtūn in the singular. The plural of this, Pashtana or Pakhtana, has given rise to the form Pathan.

particularly turned towards the province of Kandahar. Humayun, by the aid of a Persian army, took Kandahar in A.H. 952 (1545), and in recognition of the services rendered to him by Tahmasp, ceded it to his benefactor, but subsequently took back the gift. Shortly afterwards the province was annexed by Abbas the Great, but upon his death it was seized by the Uzbegs through the defection of its Persian governor, as mentioned in the previous chapter. The Uzbegs were driven out in A.H. 1021 (1634) by Shah Jahan, and in turn the province was recovered by Abbas II. in A.H. 1037 (1650). The Moghul emperors of India again and again besieged this veritable "bone of contention," Aurangzeb himself, on one occasion, taking the field in person. But the natural strength of the city defied all efforts, and consequently the province still formed part of the Persian empire in the time of Shah Husayn.

The Ghilzais.—The Ghilzai tribe are a mixed race.[1] To-day they number perhaps one hundred thousand families, and at the period under consideration were the most powerful tribe in the province of Kandahar. As the account given of the fortunes of the province proves, its overlords had been constantly changing, and the wild Ghilzais at this period were suspected, probably with good reason, of intriguing with the Court of Delhi.

The Appointment of Gurgin Khan.—It was consequently decided to appoint George or Gurgin Khan, Prince of Georgia, to govern this turbulent province, and he marched into its capital with a powerful army composed of twenty thousand Persians and a Georgian contingent. No resistance to this overwhelming force was attempted, the disloyal chiefs were cowed, and the yoke of Persia was riveted on the province more securely than before. The inhabitants were treated as conquered rebels, and the oppression to which they were exposed, together with the intriguing nature of the chiefs, led to the despatch of secret missions to Isfahan with complaints against the harshness of the Governor.

[1] The Ghilzais are generally believed to be identical with the Khalj mentioned by Idrisi, but Longworth Dames considers this very doubtful (*vide* his article "Ghalzai" in Part XX. of *Encyclopaedia of Islam*).

Mir Vais.—Gurgin Khan, on his side, was fully aware of the plot, and determined to strike at its head in the person of Mir Vais (or Wais, as Afghans would pronounce it), a leading chief of the Ghilzais and hereditary *Kalantar*, or Mayor, of Kandahar. Accordingly he was seized and sent a prisoner to the capital. At the same time Gurgin wrote that it was necessary for the peace of the province that this arch-intriguer should be kept away from Afghanistan. His unusual leniency was a main cause of the overthrow of Persia; for Mir Vais was able through his wealth and his capacity to influence the Court, and the captive became a favourite of the Shah.

In order to strengthen his position among his fellow-countrymen, he obtained permission to proceed to Mecca. There, while performing his pilgrimage, he procured in writing a decision from the leading doctors of religious law that it was not only permissible but meritorious to make war on and to destroy all Shias. Such documents would even to-day carry immense weight in Afghanistan, and two centuries ago their potency must have been very much greater. Upon his return to the capital, Mir Vais was indirectly aided in his schemes by the embassy of Peter the Great, recorded in the previous chapter. He insinuated that it was the intention of that monarch to seize Armenia and Georgia, and that Gurgin Khan was a leading conspirator in the plot. The Court, thoroughly alarmed, dared not dismiss Gurgin Khan, but as a half measure restored Mir Vais to his former post and in A.H. 1120 (1708) sent him back to Kandahar.

The Murder of Gurgin Khan and the Massacre of the Persian Garrison, A.H. 1121 (1709).—Gurgin Khan, furious at the slight, resolved to take revenge on Mir Vais, and by this act at once to overawe the province and to demonstrate his contempt for the Court. Having heard that the Chief possessed a beautiful daughter, he suddenly demanded her from her father. The latter assembled the heads of the tribe, who, moved by indignation, swore death to the Christian tyrant by bread and salt, by their swords, and by the Koran. Mir Vais dissembled, and in order to lull his enemy into a sense of

false security, sent him a handsome girl whom he passed off as his daughter. The Prince was entirely duped, and finding the Chief apparently submissive, relented and began to treat him with kindness. This gave the crafty Ghilzai the opportunity he desired. He invited Gurgin Khan to an entertainment in a garden some distance from Kandahar. There the guest and his attendants were set upon and murdered, and the Afghans came at dusk in their stead to the fort, Mir Vais wearing the clothes and riding the horse of his victim. Admitted without suspicion, they surprised the garrison, and, supported by a preconcerted attack of their fellow-countrymen, they cut off the Persians almost to a man. A body of Georgian cavalry, six hundred strong, which happened to be absent from Kandahar, was attacked on its return three days later. Performing prodigies of valour, this band of heroes made good its retreat into Khorasan and confirmed the news of the disaster to the Persian arms, which had already thrown the country into a state of panic.[1]

The Consolidation of Power by Mir Vais.—After his success Mir Vais showed energy and capacity in consolidating his power. He rallied various tribes to his aid by proclaiming independence, and even more by publishing the documents obtained at Mecca. The contemptible Court at Isfahan, instead of wiping out the disaster by force of arms, attempted to treat, but Mir Vais detained the envoy. "Be assured," he told him, "that the hour of vengeance is at hand; and that the brave Afghans are the chosen instruments of God for the punishment of the heretical Persians."

The councillors of Shah Husayn realized at last that there was no alternative to war. But at the outset no serious efforts were made, and the Governor of Khorasan, who was directed to subdue the rebels, was defeated again and again. These successes increased the prestige of Mir Vais and gave him time to strengthen his position.

His Two Victories over Persian Armies.—Goaded finally into more vigorous action, the Persian Government

[1] A somewhat different account of this disaster is given in vol. iv. of *Histoire de la Georgie* by M. Brosset.

assembled a powerful army, the command of which was given to Khusru Khan, Governor of Georgia and nephew of Gurgin Khan. Advancing on Kandahar, he defeated Mir Vais and besieged his capital. The Afghans were ready to submit if a general pardon were proclaimed, but the Georgian general, thirsting for revenge, insisted upon an unconditional surrender. In desperation the garrison prepared to resist to the death, the Persian assaults were beaten off, and the besieging army, harassed by the foe, began to suffer from scarcity. Mir Vais was able to take the field again, and this time he was successful. The Shah's army was defeated, the Georgian general killed, and of the twenty-five thousand Persians less than one thousand escaped. The date of this was A.H. 1123 (1711). A second army was raised under the command of Mohamed Rustam, but this force was also defeated, and Mir Vais by these two victories became the undisputed ruler of the province of Kandahar. Apparently no attempt was made by Persia to collect a third army, and until his death, which occurred in A.H. 1127 (1715), the Ghilzai chief was busily engaged in organizing schemes of further aggrandisement.

Mir Abdulla, A.H. 1128–1130 (1715–1717).—Mir Vais left two sons, the eldest of whom, Mahmud, was eighteen years old, but his uncle Abdulla seized the reins of power. He very soon showed his intention of making peace with Persia and sent envoys to Isfahan charged with the task. His stipulations were (*a*) that all tribute should be remitted, (*b*) that no foreign troops should be sent to Kandahar, and (*c*) that the post of Governor should be made hereditary in his family. These negotiations outraged many of the Afghans, whose pride in their hard-won independence was intense, and, knowing that he had the popular feeling behind him, Mahmud with forty supporters assassinated Mir Abdulla. It is recorded that after the deed the *Nakkara Khana*, or music, was played, that the Chiefs then assembled in council, and after examining the instructions given by Mir Abdulla to the Afghan envoys, pronounced his fate to be just, and proclaimed Mahmud ruler of Kandahar.

The Rise of the Abdalis of Herat.—As may be supposed, the success of Mir Vais had fired other provinces inhabited by Sunni populations to revolt, and among them was neighbouring Herat, which under Asadulla, the Abdali[1] chief, declared its independence and joined with the Uzbegs to plunder Khorasan. To meet this invasion, in A.H. 1132 (1719) a Persian army, thirty thousand strong, was raised and placed under the orders of Safi Kuli Khan, who marched on Herat. On the way he met and defeated twelve thousand Uzbegs, and this victory was accepted as a presage of a second and more important success.

Asadulla Khan, with only fifteen thousand Afghans, decided to engage the superior Persian force, and there was a hotly contested fight until by a mistake the Persian artillery fired on a body of their own cavalry. The error gave rise to a suspicion of treachery, which, reacting on the army, threw it into confusion. The Afghans, seeing their chance, made a decisive charge and won the day by their valour, the Persians losing one-third of their men, their general, their artillery, and their baggage. The loss to the Afghans was three thousand, or one-fifth of the army engaged; but the Abdalis, like their neighbours and rivals the Ghilzais, had won their freedom, and henceforth constituted a second independent state on the eastern frontier of Persia. Their relations with the Ghilzais were unfriendly, and even after the capture of Isfahan they were successful in taking Farrah from them.

[1] This tribe is identical with the Durrani. The popular belief is that Ahmad Shah changed the name in consequence of a dream and assumed the title of Shah *Dur-i-Durran*, or "Pearl of Pearls."




Shah Husayn.

CHAPTER LXVIII

THE OVERTHROW OF THE SAFAVI DYNASTY

'Tis easy to infer that as Shah Husayn was endow'd with some of the Qualities and Virtues which adorn a private Man, he had none of those which are necessary for a Monarch. He was good natur'd and human; but his good Nature was of that Stamp which bears with every Thing, and punishes nothing, and in which the wicked, being assur'd by it of Impunity, find their Account more than honest Men, whom it deprives of all Hopes of Justice. He hurt no particular Person, and by that Means injur'd all Mankind.—Father Krusinski on Shah Husayn.

The First Expedition of Mahmud, A.H. 1133 (1720).—The first Afghan expedition [1] into Persia was a raid rather than an invasion. Mahmud crossed the Lut to the south of Sistan, and after ravaging Narmashir advanced on Kerman, which he took by the aid of the Zoroastrian section of its inhabitants. Lutf Ali Khan, whose failure against Maskat was mentioned at the end of Chapter LXVI., was burning to redeem his reputation. He did not wait for his main army, but with a body of picked troops defeated the Afghans and captured their camp; his cavalry pursued the routed invaders back to Kandahar. Thus Mahmud's first attempt ended in disaster. Kerman was now strongly garrisoned and fortified to prevent its falling again into the hands of Afghans, and Lutf Ali Khan

[1] The authorities include the *Historical Account of British Trade over the Caspian*, by Jonas Hanway; the *History of the late Revolutions in Persia*, by Father Krusinski; and the *Jahangusha-i-Nadiri*, by *Mirza* Mehdi Khan, Nadir's Chief Secretary.

maintained a powerful army; so that a repetition of the raid seemed unlikely.

The Disgrace of the Vizier and of Lutf Ali Khan.—The Persian Empire meanwhile, unconscious of its approaching doom, continued to be distracted by Court plots and intrigues. Fatteh Ali Khan, the Vizier, was accused of treason and of instigating a body of Kurds to kill the Shah in the night. Husayn, awakened from his sleep, yielded to panic and gave orders for the Minister to be executed. The wretched man's eyes were put out and he was about to be tortured to make him reveal the whereabouts of his treasure, when the Shah realized that he had been duped. A council of nobles was summoned, before whom the Vizier cleared himself fully; but the mischief was done. Lutf Ali Khan, his brother-in-law, who had collected and trained an army for the invasion of the Kandahar province, was dismissed and, as was usual in such cases, the army dispersed. Consequently, at this grave crisis in her history Persia found herself almost defenceless through the folly of her feeble ruler.

Signs and Portents.—The year A.H. 1134 (1721) was filled with disaster and foreboding. In Khorasan the Abdali Afghans raided unchecked, and in the west the Lesgians sacked Shamakha, the capital of Shirwan. More disturbing even than raids and the sacking of cities were the signs and portents that appeared. An earthquake destroyed ill-starred Tabriz, while the usually clear atmosphere became dense, and the sun showed like a blood-red orb. The superstitious Persians were panic-stricken, and the astrologers added to their fears by prophesying the similar destruction of Isfahan. Calamity, terror, the cowardice of the Shah, the effeminacy of the Court, and the dearth of generals and soldiers together lowered the national *moral* to such a degree that probably no country has ever been essentially weaker than Iran at this critical period.

The Second Expedition of Mahmud, A.H. 1135 (1722).—The fear of invasion by Lutf Ali Khan had cowed the Ghilzais; but on hearing of his downfall they regained their courage and decided to invade Persia a second time.

Mahmud left Kandahar in mid-winter, and again traversed the desert to Narmashir and Kerman. On this occasion he took the city, but the fort resisted so stoutly that he was glad to accept the trifling sum of £5000 and raise the siege. He then marched on Isfahan by way of Yezd, which he attacked without success. From Yezd he took the direct route to the capital, and on the way was met by envoys who offered £30,000 if he and his band would return to Afghanistan. Encouraged by this sign of weakness at the heart of the Empire, the invaders pressed on as far as Gulnabad, a village on a bare featureless plain, eleven miles from Isfahan, and there halted.

The Afghan and Persian Armies.—The Afghan army now consisted of perhaps twenty thousand[1] men. It had suffered losses by death and desertion at Kerman and also at Yezd, and the only recruits who had joined it were a few Zoroastrians. Its artillery was composed of one hundred *zanburak*, or swivels—literally "little wasps"—mounted on camels and throwing a ball of a little under two pounds in weight.

The Persian force assembled at Isfahan was more than double the number and was provided with proper artillery. Its base was a populous city and it was fighting in defence of its own hearths. More than this, the fate of Persia depended on its valour. At a council of war the opinion at first prevailed that it would be better simply to hold the capital and allow the Afghans to wear themselves out against the walls. But the advocates of defensive action were overruled. The Vali of Arabia insisted upon the disgrace the Shah-in-Shah would incur if he were afraid to meet a band of plundering Afghans. In Persia self-esteem is perhaps stronger than elsewhere, and the Vali's glowing words were acclaimed and carried the day. To avoid arousing jealousy, the command of the troops was divided, and the Persian army, fifty thousand strong, strengthened by twenty-four guns, marched out to the plain of Gulnabad.[2]

[1] Krusinski doubles this number, but I follow Malcolm.

[2] Many years ago, when camped on the site of this battle, I read how the Persians, sumptuously armed and splendidly horsed with saddles and stirrups mounted with gold, laughed to scorn the ragged sun-scorched Afghans. My thoughts went back to the

The right wing was commanded by another ill-fated Rustam Khan, the General of the Royal Guards, and the left wing by the Vizier. Attached to the former was a body of Arab horse under its Vali, and to the latter a force under the Vali of Laristan. Both these wings, together about thirty thousand strong, were mounted. The centre, consisting of twenty thousand infantry, with the artillery, completed what appeared to be a formidable army.

The Afghans were drawn up in four divisions, Mahmud in the centre being supported by the best fighting men. On his right was Aman Ulla Khan, while the left was covered by the Zoroastrians. In the rear were the hundred swivels.

The Battle of Gulnabad, A.H. 1135 (1722).—The fateful battle of Gulnabad opened with a charge by the Persian right, which met with some success. Simultaneously the Vali of Arabia turned the enemy's left flank and fell on the Afghan camp, which was plundered, the Arabs taking no part in the fighting but occupying themselves with looting. The Persian left wing also charged, but the Afghans by a clever manœuvre unmasked their camel guns, which caused great havoc, and at the same moment charged the reeling column. It broke and fled and the pursuing Afghans wheeled on the rear of the artillery, which had no escort. The gunners were cut to pieces and the guns turned on the Persian infantry, which also broke and fled. No pursuit was attempted, as the Afghans busied themselves with plundering the Persian camp, and according to one account feared an ambush.

Thus ignominiously fled, with a loss of only two thousand men, a powerful Persian army fighting for everything that a nation holds dear, and never again did it dare to face the Afghans in the field. The Persian nation had ceased to be virile, and the verdict of history is that when it fell, it fell deservedly through its own cowardice.

---

battles fought by the last Sasanian monarchs against the Arabs, and I was struck by the similarity of the circumstances and conditions.

The Capture of Farrahabad and the Capitulation of Julfa.—The Ghilzai chief was not a great conqueror, although he overthrew an empire which ranked high in the world. After the battle he retired to his entrenchments and there remained wholly inactive, even allowing the Persians to return to the battlefield and take away their lost guns. He had apparently decided to retire. His spies, however, reported the panic that prevailed in the capital, and when he realized the true position he regained his courage and advanced on Isfahan. Some three miles from the city lay Farrahabad, built as a fort by Shah Husayn and strongly held; but instead of using the position to delay the Afghans, the Persians in their alarm withdrew the garrison. Julfa, situated on the right bank of the Zenda Rud, was next attacked. The Armenians offered a stout resistance and applied for reinforcements to the Vali of Arabia, who had been promoted to the supreme command. Owing to fanaticism or treachery he refused all aid; a breach was effected and the Armenians capitulated. They were ordered to pay the equivalent of £140,000 in money and to surrender fifty of their most beautiful virgins, and to both conditions they consented.

The Investment of Isfahan.—Mahmud's army encamped opposite the bridges over the Zenda Rud and occupied the beautiful palaces and gardens erected by the Safavi monarchs and their nobles. The direct opening attack on Isfahan was an attempt to secure possession of one of the stately bridges over the Zenda Rud. At first Mahmud failed, but in a second effort he was carrying the bridge when Ahmed Aga, a white eunuch, came to the rescue and beat back the Afghans. Discouraged by this failure, Mahmud was prepared to treat on condition that Kandahar, Khorasan, and Kerman should be handed over to him in independent sovereignty, and that he should be given a princess in marriage, with a settlement in money equivalent to £100,000. These terms were rejected, and Mahmud, giving up all idea of further assaults for the time being, set about devastating the country and laying in supplies for his army. This he



Flandin and Coste.

THE CHEHEL SUTUN.

316 a

was apparently permitted to do by the cowardly Persians, who could at least have cut up any small force and thereby interfered with these operations. Having successfully laid waste the thriving villages round Isfahan and driven their inhabitants into the capital, Mahmud again made an assault on one of the bridges, and this time with success, the Georgian garrison being hopelessly drunk. The Afghans then regularly invested the city, and Aman Ulla Khan intercepted two convoys of food, sent from Laristan and from the Bakhtiari country.

The Heroic Inhabitants of Ben Isfahan.—A single gleam of light relieves the otherwise unmixed poltroonery of the Persian people. Ben Isfahan,[1] a village some ten miles from the capital, declined to surrender. Its inhabitants did more. They sallied out and attacked Aman Ulla Khan when he was returning in disorder, laden with booty from the capture of the Laristan convoy. Mahmud sent reinforcements, but the bold peasantry gained a complete victory, killing a number of the enemy and capturing a brother, an uncle, and two cousins of Mahmud. Upon hearing of the disaster, the Afghan leader sent to the Shah to arrange for the release of the prisoners. This was agreed to, but the messenger the Shah despatched to Ben Isfahan found that the Afghans had already been executed. Thereupon Mahmud killed all his prisoners, and afterwards withdrew to Farrahabad in a panic. Incompetency or treachery or both prevented this success from being followed up by an attack on the discouraged Afghans, and the loss of a third convoy again dashed the hopes of the Isfahanis. Yet another blow was the refusal of aid by the Prince of Georgia, who, incensed at being prevented from punishing the Lesgians, had sworn never again to draw his sword for Persia.

The Unsuccessful Mission of Tahmasp Mirza.—Tahmasp *Mirza*, the third son of the Shah, was now taken out of the *anderun* and proclaimed heir-apparent. With an escort of six hundred men he broke out of the capital

[1] Malcolm states that Ben Isfahan was situated three miles from the capital, but Bishop Stileman, who very kindly inquired into the matter, has informed me that it is one of a group known as Seh Deh, or "Three Villages," some ten miles distant.

and proceeded to Kazvin, where he attempted to raise an army; but even the Shah Savan tribe was false to its oath, and consequently the mission, in which but little energy was displayed, proved a complete failure.

The Death of the White Eunuch.—Famine now held Isfahan in its grip, and a crowd collected outside the *anderun* and insisted on the Shah's leading them to battle. Ahmed Aga, the heroic eunuch, diverted the fury of the mob on to the enemy, whom he attacked with such dash that he seized some positions of importance. Needless to say, he was not supported, and when he made the matter known to the dastardly Shah, he was accused of meddling in affairs that did not concern him. The devoted and broken-hearted servant demonstrated to Shah Husayn that he had been made the dupe of a treacherous general, and then returned home and took poison.

Malik Mahmud of Sistan.—Among the successful adventurers of the period was Malik Mahmud, a scion of the Keianian family of Sistan. Driven from his native province, he collected a body of men in the district of Tun, where the Afshar governor of Meshed attacked him with a large force. The Keianian chief sallied out with his handful of supporters, killed the Persian general and routed his troops; after this success he became an independent ruler of the Tun district.

While the Afghans were besieging Isfahan, Malik Mahmud raised an army of ten thousand men and marched to Gulnabad. The hopes of the Persians again rose high, but only to be utterly dashed when the Keianian chief, bribed by the promise of Khorasan and Sistan and some valuable presents, deserted his country in her supreme hour of need and marched off to take possession of his provinces.

The Surrender of Isfahan, A.H. 1135 (1722).—The Shah attempted to buy off the invader by accepting the terms originally proposed by the Afghans, but Mahmud pointed out that the circumstances had entirely changed to his advantage. While these negotiations were proceeding Malik Mahmud appeared on the scene, and his



Eugene Flandin.

ISFAHAN FROM THE NORTH.

318a

desertion of Persia was the beginning of the end. Isfahan was now suffering terribly from famine, human flesh was being eaten, and the city was full of the dying and the unburied dead. At length the Shah decided to surrender. Clad in deep mourning, he proclaimed to his subjects his intention to abdicate, and on the following day signed a capitulation, by the terms of which he resigned the crown to the victor.

Proceeding to Farrahabad, he was kept waiting by the ungenerous Afghan, to whom, on being at length received, he said, "Son, since the great Sovereign of the Universe does not will that I should reign any longer, and the moment has come which He has appointed for thy ascending the throne of Persia, I resign the empire to thee. May thy reign be prosperous!" He then placed the royal plume in the turban of the victor, with the words, "Reign in peace!" Mahmud, who had remained silent, at length deigned to reply, as follows: "Such is the instability of human grandeur. God disposes of empires as He pleases: He takes them from one to give to another; but I promise to consider you as my father, and to undertake nothing without your advice." On the following day the Afghan victor entered Isfahan in triumph and received the homage of the fallen Husayn and his nobles.

The Downfall of the Dynasty.—Thus ignominiously fell the splendid Safavi dynasty. Its founder Ismail was a great man, and Shah Abbas a still greater; but it is important to note that in no instance did the dynasty embark on a policy of conquest. On its western frontiers its utmost ambition was to recover Azerbaijan and other Persian provinces from the Turks, and no attempt was made to invade Turkey. In the operations against the Uzbegs, too, there was apparently never any idea of permanently occupying Central Asia, but only of protecting Khorasan from raids and of restoring the ancient boundaries of Iran. Further south, Kandahar was originally received as a gift, and here alone can Persian policy be classed as "forward." To put the matter in another way, Constantinople was never threatened by a Safavi

force, and Turkish anxiety was never aroused by Persian policy, which at most aspired to regain Baghdad or Erivan and attempted nothing more than raids to the west of these strongholds. Beyond the eastern frontiers of Iran, Samarcand to the north and Delhi to the south were equally safe from any danger of a Persian invasion. The Safavis cannot therefore take rank with the Achaemenian or Sasanian dynasties, which created world empires; for they played a secondary rôle on the stage of history and were content if they maintained the ancient limits of Persia. Nevertheless, the prestige of the dynasty is very high among Persians owing to its national and religious character, and perhaps also to the recognition of its brilliance by European writers.




Ashraf.

CHAPTER LXIX

THE EXPULSION OF THE AFGHANS

Their Way of dressing answers to the Coarseness of their Diet. They wear a Vest, which hangs down to their Toes, and which they tuck up towards the Waste, under which they have a very wide Pair of Drawers of plain Linnen, but their Legs are always bare. The better Sort make use of Shoes or Slippers when they ride on Horseback, as also of a Sort of Boots of very hard Leather, which when they have fitted on, they never pull off but there let 'em remain till they rot away.—Krusinski, on the Afghans, vol. i. p. 147.

The First Acts of Mahmud.—The reign of Mahmud opened auspiciously. He allowed the Persian officials to retain their appointments and only added Afghans to watch his interests. Furthermore, he selected as *Kazi*, or Chief Magistrate, an Afghan noted for piety and rectitude, and he worked hard to repair the damage caused by the siege. He treated the Europeans with consideration, renewing all their privileges, and punished all those who had been disloyal to Shah Husayn. The treacherous Vali of Arabia was not put to death, Mahmud having apparently sworn to preserve his life, but he was disgraced and his post and estates were bestowed on his younger brother. In short, so just and so capable was the rule of Mahmud at the outset that it seemed possible that unhappy Iran might once again enjoy the blessings of peace and order.

The Surrender of Kum, Kashan, and Kazvin to the Afghans.—Shortly after the capitulation of Isfahan, Aman Ulla Khan was detached with five thousand men to attack Tahmasp *Mirza* and to seize Kazvin. The spiritless and

disloyal tribesmen had not rallied round the throne; consequently no resistance was offered, and Kum, Kashan, and Kazvin all opened their gates. As a set-off to these achievements, Mahmud was informed that treasure equivalent to £300,000, which he had despatched to Kandahar to be spent in recruiting his army, had been plundered by a Sistan chief. Nor was this the Afghan monarch's only embarrassment.

The Will of Peter the Great.—Among the mysteries of European history is the celebrated will of Peter the Great. It is generally believed to have been published in Europe through the instrumentality of the notorious Chevalier d'Eon, who obtained it in 1755 while he was acting as reader to Catherine the Great. It has been pronounced apocryphal, but by Persians and by many Russians its genuineness is not doubted. Even if it is not the actual political testament of Peter, it is accepted as embodying the national aspirations of Russia in the first half of the eighteenth century, and as such it deserves to be studied.[1] Its tenor is uniformly aggressive, Russia being urged to aim at almost universal dominion. We are here chiefly dealing with the instructions concerning Persia, which are as follows: "Excite continual wars, not only in Turkey but in Persia." And again: "Sweden being dismembered, Persia subjugated, etc." These words are known to every educated son of Iran through a Persian translation and ring like a knell in his ears. Thus the will of Peter the Great, although scarcely known in western Europe, constitutes, so far as Persia is concerned, an instrument of policy the influence of which can hardly be overestimated.

The Capture of Derbent by Peter, A.H. 1135 (1722).—At this period Peter the Great had finally triumphed over Sweden and was free to turn his arms elsewhere. Accordingly he hastened to profit by the weakness of Persia. While the Safavi dynasty was in its death-throes, he had sent an embassy to Shah Husayn which, on its arrival, presented itself to the victorious Afghans, demanding redress for alleged grievances, among which were the

[1] It is printed in full at the end of this chapter.

plunder of a Russian caravan by the Khan of Khiva and the losses sustained by Russian subjects at Shamakha. Mahmud, whose knowledge of foreign policy must have been slight, informed the Muscovite ambassadors that he could control neither the Uzbegs nor the Lesgians. The fact was self-evident, but the admission strengthened the case for a forward policy, and Peter felt justified in acting upon it. He descended the Volga in a flotilla carrying thirty-three thousand infantry and effected a junction in Daghestan with a force of cavalry which had marched from Astrakhan.[1] He issued a proclamation in which he declared that he had no designs of territorial aggrandisement, after which he took possession of Derbent, the importance of which has already appeared in this history. The Tsar was proceeding towards Shamakha and Baku when an Ottoman ambassador appeared on the scene, announced the capture of Shamakha by a Turkish force, and declared that any further advance by Russia would be deemed a *casus belli*. Peter was unwilling to provoke hostilities with Turkey at this juncture and withdrew to Russia, leaving a garrison of three thousand men at Derbent.

His Occupation of Resht and Baku, A.D. 1723.—During the following winter Resht was besieged by the invading Afghans. Its Governor sent an envoy to Astrakhan and offered to open the city gates to a Russian army. Peter at once took advantage of this piece of good fortune, and occupied not only Resht but other centres. The administration of the province, however, was not interfered with, but remained in the hands of the local Khans. During the summer that followed the occupation of Resht, Baku was bombarded and capitulated.

The Treaty of Shah Tahmasp with Russia, A.D. 1723.—Tahmasp, unable to meet the invaders in the field, made a bid for the support of Peter. In return for the expulsion of the Afghans, to which Russia pledged herself, Tahmasp agreed to cede Shirwan, Daghestan, Gilan, Mazanderan, and Astrabad. But no attempt was made by Peter to expel the Afghans, nor were any of the pro-

[1] A good account of this expedition is given in the *Memoir of P. H. Bruce*, a Scottish soldier of fortune who took part in the campaign.

vinces occupied except Gilan. Probably neither side intended to observe the conditions of this treaty loyally.

The Persian Insurrection at Kazvin, A.H. 1136 (1723).—At Kazvin the Afghans were dealing with a population which was more virile than that of Isfahan, but, being ignorant or careless of this circumstance, they treated its citizens with cruelty and oppression. Consequently, in a short time a well-planned insurrection broke out, the Afghans were attacked simultaneously, and were driven from the city with the loss of two thousand men and all their baggage. Ashraf, son of Mir Abdulla, returned to Kandahar with three hundred men, and the remainder retired on Isfahan, suffering severely from the cold.

This disaster and various defections left only about fifteen thousand men at Mahmud's disposal at this crisis. Comparatively few recruits had come from Kandahar to fill up his depleted regiments, whereas large bands of men had gone home laden with plunder. Three large caravans in all reached Isfahan during his reign, in the last of which was his mother, who "came to the principal Gate of the new King's Palace half naked, and what cloaths she had all in Tatters, ravenously gnawing a great Radish she held in her hand more like a Witch than the Mother of a great King."[1]

The Massacres at Isfahan, A.D. 1723.—Mahmud wished to hold Isfahan at all costs, and he determined to massacre a large number of its citizens, thinking that he would be able to rule by the terror inspired in a reduced and leaderless population. In pursuance of this fiendish plan, the day after the return of the defeated Afghans the Persian Ministers and great nobles, with only two or three exceptions, were invited to a feast, where they were massacred, and their corpses were afterwards thrown into the Great Square. Mahmud's next step was to massacre three thousand Persian guards whom he had taken into his pay. No sooner was this effected than an order was issued to put to death every Persian who had served Shah Husayn. This awful edict resulted in an indiscriminate massacre which continued for fifteen days without any

[1] Krusinski.

attempt at resistance being made, and thus the royal city was depopulated and rendered powerless. The English and Dutch factories were harshly treated and made to pay forced contributions. The Armenians of Julfa were compelled to pay a second contribution, and the Indian merchants were plundered.

The Capture of Shiraz, A.H. 1137 (1724).—Mahmud next enlisted some of the wild Kurds who, being Sunnis, were ready to serve under his standard. Mainly by their aid he reconquered the cities of Khonsar and Kashan, which had rebelled after the disaster at Kazvin. Meanwhile a detachment was conquering Fars, but Shiraz held out. Nasrulla, the leader of the Zoroastrian contingent, was killed while taking part in an assault, and in his honour his slaves and the prisoners were put to death at his funeral. His successor, Zabbardast Khan, was more fortunate. He beat off a relieving force under a brother of the Vali of Arabia, and negotiations for surrender followed. While these were in progress he observed that the soldiers had quitted their posts; he thereupon broke off the negotiations and captured Shiraz. Although famine had caused the city to surrender, a large store containing a three months' supply of grain was found, and its owner by way of punishment was bound to a stake and left to die of hunger in his own granary. Even to-day this story is remembered against the Shirazis.

An Attack on Bandar Abbas.—A detachment was next sent to attack Bandar Abbas. The inhabitants fled, but the European factories, which had beaten off a large horde of Baluchis in the previous year, were too strong to be attempted, and the Afghans having gladly accepted some supplies retired, suffering heavy losses from the bad climate. Encouraged by the capture of Shiraz, Mahmud took the field in person and marched on the Kuhgelu district to the north of Behbehan; but the Arab nomads harassed his army, which suffered also from the heat near the coast, and he was forced to retreat to Isfahan, which he re-entered by night.

Afghan Intrigues.—The prestige of Mahmud was seriously weakened by this unsuccessful campaign and

also by the failure of an attack on Yezd. He had been obliged by his nobles to recall Ashraf from Kandahar and to declare him his heir. Moreover, Aman Ulla Khan had deserted his standard, and though he had made a pretence of reconciliation it was obviously hollow. Mahmud, to ease his mind, retired into a vault for the ascetic contemplation known as *Tapassia*,[1] and after fourteen days of this existence his mind became totally unhinged.

The Massacre of the Safavi Princes.—Hitherto the blood royal had been spared in the awful massacres, but Mahmud, crediting a false rumour of the flight of Safi *Mirza*, now gave orders for the execution of the entire royal family except the wretched Husayn. With his own hands he began this extermination, in which thirty-nine members of the unfortunate dynasty are stated to have perished.

The Death of Mahmud, A.H. 1137 (1725).—This was the last recorded act of Mahmud, whose madness increased after his bloody work had been carried through. The Afghan nobles, threatened with an attack by Tahmasp, hastily elected Ashraf to the throne, and Mahmud died shortly afterwards, or possibly was killed by the orders of Ashraf.

His Appearance and Character.—Krusinski, who undoubtedly saw Mahmud, gives the following graphic description of him: "He was middle siz'd, and pretty squat: his Face broad, his Nose flattish, his Eyes blue and squinting a little, his Look fierce. His Physiognomy had something rough and disagreeable in it, discovering a Cruelty in his Nature. His neck was so monstrously short, that his Head seem'd to grow to his Shoulders. He had scarce any Beard; and what he had was carotty. His Eyes were generally down-cast, and he look'd always as if he was musing.

"He was extremely severe in military Discipline: more fear'd than belov'd by his Soldiers; they valued him for

[1] *Tapassia* is a Sanscrit word from *tap*, worship. It is adopted by the Moslem Dervishes from the Hindus, and signifies that the spirit temporarily leaves the body and becomes united with the godhead. There is a chapter in the *Shastra* on this subject.

326a



From a photograph by H. R. Sykes.

MAYDAN-I-MIR CHAKMAK, YEZD.

his Intrepidity in braving the greatest Dangers, and cry'd him up as a Man capable of the boldest Enterprizes, and whose Boldness was generally successful."[1]

Few conquests have been more extraordinary than that of Mahmud. Previous conquerors of Iran, such as Chengiz and Tamerlane, had created a powerful force before attempting the task; but Mahmud captured Isfahan, and subsequently most of central and southern Persia, with twenty thousand Afghans and without much backing from Kandahar. The cowardice, effeminacy, and corruption of Persia as represented by the Safavi dynasty was the true cause of its downfall; for, as Malcolm says, the Persian Empire resembled "a vast fabric tottering to its fall."

Of Mahmud himself, with the exception of the first few months of just rule after the capitulation of Isfahan, little good can be said. He was treacherous, narrow-minded, lacking in generosity and indeed in almost all the qualities which stamp a great conqueror; on the other hand, he was brave and energetic. Like Afghans in general, he was entirely deficient in administrative qualities and his mind was quite uncultivated. Finally, the massacres for which he was responsible have consigned his memory to wholly justifiable execration.

The Turkish Invasion of Georgia, A.D. 1722–1723.—After the death of Murad IV., the relations between Persia and Turkey were friendly for nearly a century. But when the Afghans invaded Iran, the Sunni power determined to take advantage of the impotence of the Shia state. An excellent opening was found in the province of Shirwan, whose Sunni population had been cruelly persecuted by the orders of the fanatical Husayn. The Sultan decided to appoint a governor to the province, and the officer charged with the task of conveying the Imperial orders had been despatched when information was received of the expedition of Peter the Great. After some negotiations between Turkey and Russia, conducted in Constantinople, the Turks decided to declare war against Persia, and three *futwas*, or proclamations, were issued by the

[1] ii. p. 159.

mufti, which ordered the true believers to extirpate the heretics. Simultaneously with the Russian operations on the littoral of the Caspian Sea, the Turkish troops entered Georgia, and Tiflis surrendered in A.H. 1135 (1723). Ganja was afterwards besieged, but without success, and at Baku the Turks were forestalled by the Russians.

The Russo-Turkish Treaty for the Dismemberment of Persia, A.D. 1724.—Negotiations between Turkey and Russia were resumed and culminated in an agreement for the partition of the most valuable provinces of Persia. In the north, the cession by Tahmasp to Russia of the Caspian provinces to the confluence of the Kur with the Araxes was confirmed by the two powers. Turkey took up the new frontier line from this point and drew it close to the west of Ardebil so as to include Tabriz, which, with Hamadan and Kermanshah and all the districts between them and the Turkish frontier, was to be included within the Ottoman empire. It was cynically agreed that, if Tahmasp consented to these conditions, he should be aided to recover his throne. If, however, he proved obdurate, the two powers were to provide for the future tranquillity of Persia by raising to the throne whichever candidate was held to be most deserving.

The Conquest of Western Persia by the Turks, A.D. 1724–1725.—After the conclusion of the treaty by which Persia was thus partially dismembered, it remained for the Turks to make good the possession of their share, Russia having already occupied the western part of her portion. The Turkish army first marched on Hamadan, which fell after a short siege in A.H. 1136 (1724). Meanwhile a second Turkish force had advanced on Erivan, which was justly regarded as the strongest fortress in the country. Operations were pushed on with the utmost determination, and in spite of the loss of twenty thousand men in four assaults and by disease Erivan was taken in A.H. 1137 (1724) after a three months' siege ; the garrison marched out with the honours of war.

The victorious army was now directed against Tabriz. A Persian force ten thousand strong was defeated outside the city, which seemed likely to be taken without much

328[a]



Eugene Flandin.

HAMADAN WITH MOUNT ALVAND IN THE BACKGROUND.

difficulty, as owing to an earthquake its walls had fallen down. But the brave garrison contrived to intercept a body of troops marching with a convoy from Aleppo, and as assaults failed the siege was temporarily raised in September 1724. In the summer of the following year a Turkish army seventy thousand strong again appeared on the scene. The defence was heroic, the Persians losing thirty thousand men and the Turks twenty thousand, but the besiegers at length gained possession of almost the whole city. Ultimately terms were arranged by which the Tabrizis marched out with their families and property, leaving their deserted abodes to the victors. Had the citizens of Isfahan displayed a tithe of the courage shown by the Tabrizis—who are of Turkish rather than of Persian stock—the invasion of Mahmud would undoubtedly have ended in failure.

The Turks subsequently rounded off their conquests so that the whole of western Persia was in their hands.

The Accession of Ashraf, A.H. 1137 (1725).—Ashraf was of a different calibre from Mahmud, and in many ways resembled his uncle, Mir Vais. He enjoyed great prestige among his fellow-tribesmen, whose *moral* was restored by his accession to the throne. His first act was to kill the too capable Aman Ulla and other powerful chiefs, whose fortunes he confiscated. To conciliate the Persians he played the part of a generous monarch, anxious to atone for the misdeeds of his predecessor. In pursuance of this policy the mother of Mahmud was obliged, as an act of atonement, to pass a night in the Royal Square close to the corpses of the Safavi princes, which were then buried with much pomp in the sacred shrine of Kum. To complete the playing of his part, Ashraf begged Husayn to resume the crown, and only after repeated requests by the fallen Safavi monarch did he place the symbol of royalty on his own head.

During the reign of Mahmud, Ashraf had treacherously opened negotiations with Tahmasp. He now attempted to lure him into his power, and had almost succeeded when the Prince was secretly warned and saved himself by flight. Ashraf used this as a pretext to

put to death the few Persian nobles who had escaped the previous massacres. He then occupied himself in consolidating his power, and constructed a strong fort in Isfahan to serve both as a refuge and rallying-point for the Afghans and their families, and also as a treasury.

The Victory of Ashraf over the Turks, A.H. 1138 (1726).—The position of affairs in Persia at this period was interesting. Ashraf held Isfahan, Shiraz, and south-east Persia generally, but can hardly be said to have administered the country. His army received but few recruits from Kandahar, which was governed by Husayn, brother of Mahmud ; he was consequently restricted to a defensive policy. Shah Tahmasp was in Mazanderan and was still obliged to remain more or less a spectator of events, although Fath Ali Khan, the Kajar Chief, had thrown in his lot with him, and a force was being gradually recruited. The Russian Government under Catharine was determined to maintain its position in Persia, but there was no thought of fulfilling the terms of the treaty with Turkey. The Ottoman Government alone pursued a forward policy.

Ashraf had sent an embassy to remonstrate at the action of a Sunni power in co-operating with a Christian state to attack a Sunni neighbour with the avowed purpose of restoring the heretical Shia dynasty. In spite of the pro-Afghan feeling aroused in Constantinople, the ambassador of Ashraf, who took a very high tone, was dismissed, war was declared, and a Turkish army, after seizing Maragha and Kazvin, advanced on Isfahan. Ashraf, whose military qualities were considerable, attacked and cut to pieces a detached body of the Turks two thousand strong, and this success produced a considerable moral effect, besides causing Ahmad Pasha, the Turkish general, to halt and entrench his position.

In order to excite dissensions among the enemy, the cunning Afghan despatched four venerable *mullas*, who asked Ahmad Pasha why he was warring on Moslems who were obeying the divine precepts of the law in subverting the power of the heretical Shias. To this awkward question a reply was given that he was acting by

orders of the Caliph, to whom Ashraf must submit under pain of feeling his power. So upset were the Turks by this mission that a body of them deserted together with a large contingent of Kurds. Ahmad Pasha, who had sixty thousand men and seventy guns, decided to force a general engagement without further delay. The Afghans, with only one-third of this number and forty "little wasps," fought superbly and won, killing twelve thousand Turks in the battle. With consummate diplomacy the victor refused to allow any pursuit, and even released his prisoners and restored all the personal property of the vanquished Turks. This masterly moderation produced a strong feeling in his favour, and a treaty was concluded in A.H. 1140 (1727), in which Ashraf acknowledged the Sultan as Caliph, and was himself recognized in return as Shah of Persia. The provinces held by Turkey were all ceded to the Sultan. In other words, Persia was dismembered. The boundary between the Turkish and Russian acquisitions was fixed later by the two powers.

Shah Tahmasp joined by Nadir Kuli, A.H. 1139 (1727).—The Afghan monarch was no sooner freed from the fear of the Turks than he was confronted with an even more serious danger. One source of extreme weakness was his failure to secure the city of Kandahar. This lessened, if it did not altogether stop, the stream of Afghan recruits; it is indeed curious to notice how little initiative the Afghan tribes displayed, for few came to Persia even after the capture of Isfahan. At this juncture Tahmasp, who held his Court at Farrahabad in Mazanderan, was joined by Nadir Kuli, who was destined to achieve fame as the last great Asiatic conqueror. He brought with him five thousand war-hardened Afshars and Kurds. Fath Ali Khan Kajar had already collected three thousand men, recruits flocked in, and a national reaction began.

The Conquest of Khorasan by Nadir Kuli.—Nadir persuaded the young Shah in the first place to march into Khorasan, where the sacred city of Meshed and Herat were in the hands of Malik Mahmud and of the Abdali Afghans respectively. On the march he killed his rival, Fath Ali Khan, grandfather of the founder of the present

dynasty, whose tomb I have visited near Meshed.[1] This act was evidently approved by the Shah, who immediately appointed Nadir his Commander-in-Chief. In this campaign success returned to the Safavi arms, both Meshed and Herat were reduced, as will be narrated in the next chapter, and among the honours heaped on Nadir was the title of Tahmasp Kuli Khan, *Kuli* signifying a "slave."

The Defeat of the Afghans at Mehmandost, A.H. 1141 (1729).—Meanwhile Ashraf was collecting his troops, fully realizing that he must once again stake everything on a decisive battle. Owing to home troubles and the necessity of garrisoning important centres, his field army was only thirty thousand strong. One half of this force was composed of Afghans, and owing to the recent brilliant victory gained over the Turks the *moral* of his veterans must have been high.

Nadir had wisely persuaded the Shah to draw the Afghan force from Isfahan, and the event proved his sagacity. Ashraf, realizing that the Persian army was daily increasing in numbers, decided to march into Khorasan before it became too strong, and Damghan, situated near the Parthian capital Hecatompylus, was the scene of the first of many victories in which the arms of Iran, after a humiliating eclipse, were victorious against a foreign foe. The Afghans charged with savage shouts, but made no impression on the veterans trained by Nadir, whose musketry and artillery fire inflicted heavy losses. Ashraf immediately detached two columns to make a circuit on the right and left of the enemy, while he himself again charged the front. Nadir was far too experienced a general to allow these tactics to succeed. Beating off the attacks with ease, he ordered a general advance, which broke the Afghans, who were discouraged by the death of their leader's standard-bearer. Leaving their camp to the enemy, they fled panic-stricken and with reduced numbers along the road to Teheran, where it is said they arrived in two days' time—a distance of two hundred miles. This battle is known as the battle

[1] "Historical Notes on Khorasan," *Journal R.A.S.*, Oct. 1910.

of Mehmandost, from a river which divided the two armies.

The Second Defeat of the Afghans at Murchakhar, A.H. 1141 (1729).—The defeated army retired on Isfahan, where Ashraf collected all the families and property of the Afghans into the fort. Then, taking up an entrenched position at Murchakhar, thirty-six miles to the north, he prepared to fight a decisive battle for his throne.

Nadir prevailed on Tahmasp to remain at Damghan, and himself marched south from Teheran. Hailed as the deliverer of Iran, he was joined by hundreds of men anxious to be in at the death of the invaders. He found the Afghans in a strong position, but their numbers were small and Nadir's victorious tribesmen would suffer no denial. The Afghans fought bravely, but, after losing four thousand men, broke and fled to Isfahan. There they prepared for flight, and before sunrise a huge caravan carrying their families and treasure left Isfahan for Shiraz. The helpless Husayn was put to death by Ashraf before he departed.

The Reoccupation of Isfahan.—Nadir did not follow up the defeated army into Isfahan, for reasons which remain obscure. Not until he heard of the flight of the Afghans did he despatch a body of troops to take possession of the palace, and he delayed his own entry into the capital until three days after his victory. His arrival was the signal for the destruction of the mausoleum erected over Mahmud, whose corpse was disinterred. The tomb was made a repository for filth by the instructions of Nadir, who little thought that his own resting-place would one day receive like treatment. Tahmasp, who had followed the Persian army to Teheran, made his entry into Isfahan shortly after Nadir, and we read that he burst into tears as he visited the defaced palaces of the Safavis. A dramatic surprise was in store for the young Shah, who was suddenly greeted by his mother. She had disguised herself as a slave, and for a period of seven years had acted her part without being discovered.

The Final Rout of the Afghans, A.H. 1142 (1730).—The Afghans were allowed ample time to rally at Shiraz.

Tahmasp urged Nadir to pursue them, but the astute General demanded the power of levying taxes before he would consent to quit Isfahan. For a while the Shah demurred at ceding this authority, which gave his Commander-in-Chief almost sovereign powers. But at length he yielded, and Nadir once again marched to give battle to the Afghans, who made a last stand at Zarghan, some twenty miles to the north of Shiraz. The Ghilzais attacked, but were again repulsed by the heavy musketry fire ; they broke when charged by Nadir, and a few hours later reached Shiraz in complete disorder. Ashraf wished to treat for a retirement with the honours of war, but Nadir replied that all the Afghans would be killed unless they surrendered their leader. The Ghilzai Khans basely agreed to this demand, but Ashraf saved himself for a time by suddenly breaking away with two hundred followers. This was the signal for the army to disperse in bands, which under their respective chiefs followed separate routes, mainly towards Kandahar. The Persian pursuit was successful, the fleeing Afghans being easily tracked by the camels which had broken down and died, and even by the corpses of old men and children who, when tired out, had been put to death to save them from the vengeance of the Persian horsemen.

The Death of Ashraf, A.H. 1142 (1730).—Lar and Kerman then rose, and Ashraf, realizing that all hope of maintaining his position even in these remote provinces was ended, attempted to reach his native province by way of Sistan. But the Baluchis, who had at one time been his allies, were now ready to plunder the defeated and demoralized Afghans. Ashraf was found by a young Baluch Khan wandering about in the Lut with only two attendants, and was at once killed. His head, together with a large diamond found upon him, was sent as a gift to Shah Tahmasp, who must have rejoiced at the retribution that had befallen the slayer of his unfortunate father.

Ashraf had played his part on the stage well, and his misfortunes were due less to his own mistakes than to circumstances over which he had no control. Having

failed, he was fortunate in his speedy death. Few of the invaders escaped. One division attempted to get away by sea, but was cut to pieces at Bahrein when it landed, and individual survivors were found years afterwards eking out a miserable existence at Maskat.

The Flight of the Afghans.—Thus in a torrent of blood the Afghans were drowned. They had achieved a remarkable conquest with slender means, and, had their fellow-tribesmen joined them in sufficient numbers, they might have held their own for some time against the national revival. But their barbarous organization, while good enough for conquest, massacre, and destruction, was totally incapable of administering the kingdom they had won so easily. The invaders remained, therefore, a numerically small band of hated aliens, which, even under a fine leader like Ashraf, could not stand against the troops of Nadir.

The Will of Peter the Great

Preliminary Clause.—In the name of the most holy and indivisible Trinity, we Peter I., Emperor and Autocrat of all the Russias, to all our descendants to the throne and government of the Russian nation. The All-Powerful, to whom we owe our existence, makes us regard the Russian people which is constantly guided by His light, and sustained by His Divine support, as called in the future to be the dominant race in Europe. This idea strikes us from the fact that European nations have for the greater part arrived at a state of old age allied to decay, or at all events this approaches them with rapid strides. From this it results that they ought to be easily and assuredly conquered by a young and new people, when the latter shall have attained all their force and power.

I regard the approaching invasion of the Western and Oriental nations by the North as a periodic movement decreed and designed by Providence, who in such a manner regenerated the Roman people by means of an invasion of barbarians. This emigration of men from the direction of the Pole is like the reflux of the Nile, which at certain times nourishes with its mud the western land of Egypt. I have found Russia to be this river, and so I leave her. My successors will make her a great sea destined to fertilize impoverished Europe, and if my descendants know how to direct the waters, her waves will break through any opposing

banks. It is just for this reason that I leave the following instructions, and I recommend them to the attention and constant observation of my descendants.

I. To keep Russia in a state for continual war, to hold the soldier ever ready, and never give him rest except for the purpose of recovering the finances of the country and the improvement of the army. To choose the most favourable moment for attack, to follow up peace by war, and war by peace, in the interest, aggrandisement, and growing prosperity of Russia.

II. To entice by every means possible from the cleverest people of Europe officers during war and savants during peace, in order to improve the Russians at the expense of other nations without losing her own advantages.

III. To take part on every occasion in the affairs and discussions of Europe, whatever they may be, and especially in those concerning Germany, who as our most intimate neighbour interests us more directly.

IV. To divide Poland, and keep up in that kingdom a constant disorder and continual jealousy, gain over the other Powers at the price of gold, influence the Polish assemblies and corrupt them, so as to obtain an interest in the election of kings, to name partisans and protect them as an excuse for the entry of Muscovite troops there, to remain until the day arrives for a permanent occupation. If the neighbouring Powers put forth difficulties, tranquillize them for a moment by dividing the country until we can retake as much of it as we have given up to them.

V. To take as much as we can of Sweden, and induce her to attack us, in order that we may have the pretext for subjugating her. For this purpose we must isolate Denmark from Sweden, and favour the rivalry between these countries.

VI. To choose always German princesses for our princes in order to promote family alliances, reunite our interests, and so bring Germany over to our cause for the augmentation of our influence.

VII. To give the preference to an alliance with England for commerce, she being the Power which has the greatest need of us for her marine, while at the same time she can be most useful to us for the development of our own. To exchange our wood and products for her gold, and establish continual relations between us with regard to her merchandize, her sailors, and our own, which will be in the interest of this country for navigation and commerce.

VIII. To extend ourselves without ceasing towards the North along the Baltic, and also towards the South along the Black Sea.

IX. To approach as near as possible to Constantinople and

India. Whoever governs there will be the true sovereign of the world. Consequently excite continual wars, not only in Turkey, but in Persia. Establish dockyards on the Black Sea, seize upon little pieces near this sea as well as on the Baltic, which is doubly necessary for the attainment of our project. And in the decadence of Persia, penetrate as far as the Persian Gulf, re-establish if it be possible the ancient commerce with the Levant, advance as far as India, which is the depot of the world. Arrived at this point, we shall have no longer need of England's gold.

X. To endeavour to maintain with care the alliance with the house of Austria, appear to support her in her policy of future domination in Germany, and foster below the surface the jealousy of the princes. Endeavour to induce her to demand the assistance of Russia .by one means or another, and to exercise over the country a species of protection which may prepare for future domination.

XI. To interest the house of Austria in driving the Turk out of Europe, to neutralize her jealousies at the moment of the conquest of Constantinople, either by exciting her to war with the great Powers of Europe, or by giving her a portion of the conquest, which we will retake from her at a later period.

XII. To endeavour to reunite around us all the disunited and schismatic Greeks who are scattered over Hungary or Turkey or the middle of Poland, to be their centre, their support, to establish in advance an universal predominance by means of a kind of automatic or sacerdotal supremacy as a friend to each enemy.

XIII. Sweden being dismembered, Persia subjugated, Poland crushed, Turkey conquered, our army reunited, the Black Sea and Baltic guarded by our ships, we must then propose separately, and very secretly, first to the Court of Versailles, then to that of Vienna, to share with them the empire of the universe. If one of the two accept, which is nearly certain, by flattering her ambition and national vanity, to make use of her for crushing the other. Finally, to annihilate in her turn the one which remains, by commencing a struggle which cannot be perilous, Russia possessing already all the Eastern or greater portion of Europe.

XIV. If (which is not impossible) each of these powers should refuse the project of Russia, we must know how to excite them to quarrel one with the other, and so act that they may enfeeble themselves through each other. Then, taking advantage of the decisive moment, Russia must advance her troops, now reunited, on Germany, at the same time send two considerable fleets, one starting from the sea of Azof and the other from Archangel with Asiatic troops; through the assistance of these armed fleets,

advancing by the Mediterranean and the ocean, France will be invaded on one side, Germany on the other. These two countries conquered, the rest of Europe will pass easily and without striking a blow beneath the yoke. It is thus that we can, and we ought to, subjugate Europe.[1]

---

[1] I am indebted to Col. H. Picot for the above translation.



NADIR SHAH.

CHAPTER LXX

THE RISE OF NADIR KULI TO THE THRONE OF PERSIA

We find a man, whose birth and beginning were so obscure as with difficulty to be traced out; conducting to an issue, with resolution and steadiness, opportunities he had worked out for himself; planning with deliberation and foresight, the fabrick of his future fortune; and carrying his designs into execution, with an unwearied application, till, like other mighty conquerors before him, he became terrible to Asia and the undoubted arbiter of the East. —HANWAY, on Nadir Shah.

The Origin and Birthplace of Nadir Kuli.—Nadir Shah, the last great Asiatic conqueror, was born and bred in Khorasan, which he ever regarded as his home. I have visited the site of his birth and also Kalat-i-Nadiri and other districts specially connected with the great Afshar, some of whose descendants I also know. Consequently I am able to give stories and legends of the hero, whose name still looms very large in Khorasan, as told me by various Persian friends.[1]

Nadir Kuli, or "The Slave of the Wonderful," the adjective being one of the many epithets of the Deity, was the son of Imam Kuli, a humble member of the Kirklu tribe which, owing to its weakness, united with the more powerful Afshar tribe. The home of Imam

[1] The authorities for this period include the *Historical Account of British Trade over the Caspian*, containing a *Life of Nadir Shah* by J. Hanway; the *Life of Nadir Shah* and a historical novel, *The Kizilbash*, by J. B. Fraser; a paper in the *R.A.S.* (Jan. 1908), and a historical novel, *Nadir Shah*, by Sir Mortimer Durand. In *Historiens Arméniens*, by M. Brosset, there is a valuable contemporary account of Nadir Shah by Abraham of Crete, and in vol. v. of *Histoire de la Georgie*, by the same author, there is a letter written by Heraclius II. to his sister, in which the Indian campaign is described. Of Oriental writers the *Jahangusha-i-Nadiri*, by Mehdi Khan, is most valuable, and so in a lesser degree are the *Memoirs of Abdulkurreem*. Finally, I have been given notes by Said Ali Khan Chapashlu of Darragaz, whose ancestor was a favourite general of Nadir Shah's.

Kuli was a hamlet termed Kupkan, situated on the south side of the Allah ho Akbar range, on the road which runs from Kuchan to Darragaz. There he earned his living by making sheepskin coats, and by grazing a few sheep and goats near his village in the summer and in the warmer plains to the north in winter. Imam Kuli and his wife were moving with the members of their tribe from the heights of the Allah ho Akbar range to the neighbourhood of low-lying Abivard in the autumn of 1100 (1688), and when they were encamped close to the little town of Mohamedabad,[1] the future Shah was born.

His Captivity and Escape.—The youth of Nadir Kuli was spent in tending flocks and bringing in fuel on an ass and a camel which constituted the sole patrimony of his family after the death of his father. When he was about eighteen years of age, he and his mother were carried off by a raiding party of Uzbegs to Khiva, where four years later his mother died in slavery. The young Nadir Kuli contrived to escape and returned penniless to Khorasan, where he climbed the first step up the ladder of success by entering the service of Baba Ali Beg, Ahmadlu Afshar, who was Governor of Abivard, at that period the capital of the district.[2]

Appointment to Abivard.—Malik Mahmud, after leaving Isfahan to its fate, as mentioned in Chapter LXVIII., had soon found an opportunity of seizing Meshed, which had fallen a prey to anarchy. Once secure in his possession of the sacred city, he prepared a crown fashioned like that of the Keianis, and established himself as an independent ruler with a regular army of infantry, artillery, and cavalry. It happened that in the absence of Baba Ali Beg, one of his *mamurs* or officials came to Abivard and ill-treated the family of the Governor. Nadir Kuli immediately came to the rescue and killed the official. His master, upon his return, was in great perplexity; but Nadir with remarkable courage proposed

[1] This is now termed *Kala Kuhna*, or "Old Fort," and is perhaps a mile from the present town.

[2] Abivard or Bavard is now a ruin, situated in the vicinity of Kahkha on the Central Asian Railway.



From a photograph by the Author.

KUPKAN, THE HOME OF IMAM KULI.

340a

that he should himself proceed to Meshed. There he pleaded that as a loyal servant he was bound to defend his master's honour, and Malik Mahmud not only pardoned him, but gave him a robe of honour. Shortly after this event Nadir married his master's daughter, who subsequently became the mother of the unfortunate Riza Kuli. Upon the death of Baba Ali, for which according to some accounts Nadir was responsible, he succeeded to the governorship of Abivard.

Service under Malik Mahmud.—The rise to power of a clever, resolute leader of men was speedy in those troublous times, and Nadir Kuli was soon employed by Malik Mahmud to attack the raiding Uzbegs. He distinguished himself by winning a battle, but, having exhibited too much freedom in claiming the deputy-governorship of Khorasan as his promised reward, he was beaten and then dismissed. His experience as a leader of mounted troops serving with artillery and with infantry armed with muskets must have been of great value as a preparation for his future career.

His Capture of Kalat and Nishapur.—After suffering this reverse of fortune, Nadir, like his great prototype Yakub bin Lays, became a robber. His ability and success soon brought him recruits, and during the period of anarchy which followed the capitulation of Isfahan he collected a large force of men and began to levy contributions in Khorasan. He also obtained possession of Kalat[1] and, secure in this impregnable fortress, destined to become famous as Kalat-i-Nadiri, he was in a very different position from the ordinary leader of a gang of robbers, and his influence spread far and wide.

But Nadir was not content to remain a mere brigand, and shortly after possessing himself of Kalat he decided to attack Nishapur, held at that time by the troops of Malik Mahmud. He first of all surprised and cut to pieces a foraging party six hundred strong, and then lured the main body of the garrison into an ambush and destroyed it. Nishapur opened its gates and was occupied

[1] Said Ali Khan, my local authority, states that the story according to which Kalat was held by Nadir's uncle is entirely unfounded, and I have adopted his views on the subject.

in the name of Shah Tahmasp, whose service Nadir afterwards entered.

His Dreams.—The ambitions of the Afshar chief were already fully developed, and he dreamed a dream, in which he caught a fish with four horns, indicating the conquest of four kingdoms. He also dreamed that Ali girded him with a sword, calling upon him to save Persia and promising him the throne.

The Capture of Meshed and the Execution of Malik Mahmud.—The capture of Meshed was a great service rendered by Nadir to the Safavi dynasty. There was much skirmishing, and he was successful in a battle, but Meshed was not to be won by these means. Treachery aided the fortunate Afshar, who gained an entrance into the heart of the city by the surrender of a gate. Malik Mahmud fought desperately, but was defeated, and when Meshed was taken he gave himself up. At first he was permitted to occupy a dervish's cell in the shrine, but as he became a centre of intrigues he was put to death by Nadir's orders.

The Reward for the Expulsion of the Afghans.—Tahmasp had apparently few illusions as to the character of his great general. His expulsion of the Afghans, narrated in detail in the last chapter, was however too signal a service to be rewarded in the ordinary manner, and the Shah perforce bestowed on him Khorasan, Sistan, Kerman, and Mazanderan, together with the title of Sultan. Nadir was too astute to assume the title, but he struck money in his own name and with it paid his army; and in the East this is tantamount to an assumption of sovereignty.

Nadir Kuli's First Turkish Campaign.—After the extirpation of the Afghan invaders, Nadir Kuli turned his attention to the Turks. The position, indeed, was serious, as the whole of Azerbaijan and most of Irak was in the possession of the Sultan. In fact it was far worse than the situation which had faced Shah Abbas, who commanded the entire resources of Persia as its lawful monarch, whereas Nadir Kuli was hampered by Shah Tahmasp. His first campaign was highly successful.



From a photograph by the Author.

A CHAPASHLU TRIBESMAN OF DARRAGAZ.

Defeating a Turkish army near Hamadan, he gained possession of both Irak and Azerbaijan, and he was besieging Erivan when news of a rebellion in Khorasan diverted him for a while from his main objective. He raised the siege at once and marched some fourteen hundred miles eastwards to invest Herat.

Tahmasp's Disastrous Campaign against the Turks, A.H. 1144 (1731).—Shah Tahmasp, fired by Nadir Kuli's successes, determined to take the field in person against the Turks. The defeat of the Ottoman army had reacted on the situation in Constantinople, where the Janissaries had dethroned Ahmad III. and placed Mahmud V. on the throne. Nadir Kuli despatched an envoy to the new Sultan. However, before the result of this mission was known, Tahmasp began a fresh siege of Erivan. But he retreated from before that fortress, was defeated by a Turkish army at Korijan, near Hamadan, with heavy losses, and in a single month lost all that Nadir had won back. In the following year he made a treaty with the Turks, by the terms of which the Aras became the boundary of Persia. He ceded Ganja, Tiflis, Erivan, Nakhchivan, Shamakha, and Daghestan, but retained Tabriz, Ardelan, Kermanshah, Hamadan, and Luristan. The treaty, which contained eight articles, also dealt with pilgrimage, commerce, the establishment of consuls at Constantinople and Isfahan and other matters. There was no provision for the release of Persian prisoners.

His Dethronement in A.H. 1145 (1732).—The defeat of Tahmasp afforded Nadir Kuli the pretext he had hitherto lacked. In the first place, he issued a proclamation protesting against the treaty in no measured terms. To quote from the *Jahangusha* : "As the articles are against the pleasure of the Most High and contrary to the interest of this empire, we have not thought it right to agree to them. Moreover, the very angels which surround the tomb of the great Caliphs, Commanders of the Faithful, and above all the victorious Ali son of Abu Talib, on whom be the peace of the Lord! desire before the throne of God the release of Moslem prisoners. . . ."[1]

[1] Vol. xi. p. 236.

He wrote letters, moreover, to the Governors of the various provinces, denouncing the treaty and threatening with expulsion from the sect and with death all Shias who refused to fight.

At the same time he took the more formal step of despatching an envoy to Constantinople with the laconic message, "Restore the provinces of Persia or prepare for war." Having by these means excited the inhabitants of the country against their Shah, Nadir Kuli marched to Isfahan. There he upbraided Tahmasp, and then seized him and sent him prisoner to Khorasan; but, as he did not yet feel in a position to usurp the throne, he had recourse to the ancient device of an infant puppet in the person of a son of Tahmasp, and was himself proclaimed Regent.

The Battle of Karkuk, A.H. 1146 (1733).—Nadir's second campaign opened with the siege of Baghdad, whose defender, Ahmad Pasha, after being defeated in the open, was prepared to offer a desperate resistance. The situation, however, was entirely changed by the advance of a powerful Turkish army under *Topal*[1] Osman. Nadir unwisely divided his force and, leaving twelve thousand men to occupy the trenches before Baghdad, marched north to meet the Turks at Karkuk or Kirkuk, near Samarra. The battle was one of the fiercest ever fought between the two nations. At first the Persians gained an advantage in defeating the Turkish cavalry, but the flight of the horsemen left the formidable Ottoman infantry unmoved, and its advance restored the battle. Nadir had expected aid from a body of Arabs, but they attacked one of his flanks. Gradually the battle went against the Persians, the horse of the Persian leader was twice shot under him, and his standard-bearer fled, believing him to be killed. This decided the day, and after eight hours' desperate fighting, the Persian army was routed. The news quickly reached Baghdad, where the isolated Persian division was then annihilated. The main army fled in disorder and in a state of such demoralization that it was not re-formed

[1] *Topal* signifies a "cripple." As a young man Osman had been badly wounded and he never recovered the full use of his legs.

until it reached Hamadan, two hundred miles from the battlefield.

Nadir's position must have been extremely critical after this disaster, but he rose to the occasion, and, instead of reproaching his soldiers, encouraged them by making good their losses and by every other means that was possible. So extraordinary were his personality and reputation that recruits flocked in from every district of Persia, and in less than three months after his crushing defeat he was ready once again to take the field with a powerful and well-equipped army.

The Persian Victory over Topal Osman, A.H. 1146 (1733).—The Turkish general after gaining this splendid victory became the victim of intrigues in Constantinople, as the result of which both pay and reinforcements for the army were withheld. Consequently he was in a position of marked inferiority at the opening of the new campaign. But he was no coward, and he sent his cavalry forward to meet the enemy at Leilan,[1] near the Tigris. As in the previous battle, the Turks were unable to withstand the numerically stronger Persian mounted force, but on this occasion in their flight they swept away the infantry with them. Topal Osman, who was carried in a litter, was killed and the Turkish army was routed.

After wiping out his defeat by this signal victory Nadir marched on Baghdad, but hearing of a revolt in Fars he made peace with Ahmad Pasha. He then, by a forced march, surprised the rebel Mohamed Khan Baluch, who was defeated and brought as a prisoner to Shiraz, where he committed suicide.

The Persian Victory of Baghavand, A.H. 1148 (1735).—The Sultan refused to ratify the treaty made by the Governor of Baghdad, and a fresh Turkish army was despatched under Abdulla Koprulu. Nadir immediately besieged Tiflis, Erivan, and Ganja with the design of forcing the Turkish leader to a general engagement. In this he was successful, as Abdulla, quitting his entrenched camp near Kars, advanced on Erivan at the head of 80,000 men, and attacked the Persians, who had

[1] Both these battles were fought near Karkuk.

retired to a chosen position on the plains of Baghavand. The Persian forces, though inferior in numbers, gained a complete victory. The Turks after experiencing crushing losses fled, the Ottoman general being among the slain. Tiflis, Ganja, and Erivan were the spoils of victory, and the Ottoman Court, taught by bitter experience, agreed to the terms of the Peace of Baghdad.

The Evacuation of the Caspian Provinces by Russia.—Upon the death of Peter the Great the forward policy was abandoned and the councillors of Anne, realizing the strain it had entailed on Russian resources, decided to evacuate the Caspian provinces. Mazanderan and Astrabad, which had never been occupied by the Russians, together with Gilan were restored to Persia by the Treaty of Resht in 1732, and by a second treaty, made in 1735, Baku and Derbent were given up.[1] Hanway corroborates this latter date.

According to Persian accounts, Nadir sent an ultimatum to the Russian general requiring him to leave the country, on pain of being driven out by Nadir's *farrashes*, or servants. A Muscovite envoy was sent to Meshed to treat with Nadir, but the latter refused to give an immediate reply. The envoy accompanied the Persian camp, and one day was summoned by the great Conqueror, who had just gained a fresh victory. He found Nadir sitting on the ground eating bread with his hands and clothes reeking with blood, and when he inquired the reason of his being summoned, Nadir replied that he wished the envoy to see how he ate the coarsest fare with blood-stained hands : he could tell his master that such a man would never surrender Gilan. In the *Jahangusha* it is stated that the Russians agreed to evacuate Resht and Lahijan after the expulsion of the Afghans but that they delayed the fulfilment of the treaty until the following year, when Nadir had taken Herat. The European accounts would appear to be the more trustworthy.

The Accession of Nadir Kuli to the Throne, A.H. 1148 (1736).—Nadir, who was now all-powerful with his army, took advantage of the death of the infant Shah to carry

[1] *Aitchison's Treaties*, p. 5.



NADIR SHAH.

(From a Persian picture.)

(By kind permission of the Secretary of State for India.)

out his scheme of usurping the crown. The leading officials in Persia were invited to celebrate the *No Ruz*, or "New Year's Day," on the plain of Moghan, a celebrated pasture which stretches from the neighbourhood of Ardebil to the mouth of the Kur. Surrounded with all the attributes of power, the great Conqueror harangued the assembled dignitaries and exhorted them to choose a worthy Shah from among the princes of the blood. As he anticipated, he was unanimously requested to protect Persia and to ascend the vacant throne. After refusing daily for a month, he permitted himself at last to be persuaded by the prayers of the assembly, and so ended the farce.[1]

The Abolition of the Shia Doctrines.—To his acceptance of the throne was attached the stipulation that the Persian nation should abandon the Shia heresy introduced by the founder of the Safavi dynasty and return to orthodoxy. In his rescript on the subject Nadir wrote: "Since the Shia schism has prevailed, this land has been constantly in disorder. Let us all become Sunnis and this will cease. But, as every national religion should have a head, let the holy Imam Jafar, who is of the family of the Prophet and whom we all reverence, be our head." According to Hanway, the Chief *Mujtahid* arose and advised Nadir to confine himself to ruling in temporal matters; but the sudden death of this dignitary warned his fellow-doctors of law to refrain from opposition. The change was therefore formally approved by the great meeting, although inwardly it must have been detested by the large majority of the Persians who were present. In order to make the new departure less unpalatable, Nadir declared his fixed intention to add to the four orthodox sects of the Sunnis—to wit, the Hanifites, the Shafiites, the Malikites, and the Hanbalites—a fifth sect, the Jafarites. By this fundamental change, for which at most a formal assent was gained, Nadir doubtless hoped to make the people of Persia forget the illustrious Safavi dynasty; perhaps also he dreamed of ruling over a united

[1] Abraham of Crete, who was among the dignitaries invited to the plain of Moghan, gives a full account of the proceedings.

Moslem empire which should include the Ottoman dominions. But, although for a while it was realized that Nadir Kuli alone was fitted to rule the land, no affection was ever felt for his family, and at his death those who rallied to protect it were few in number.

The Coronation of Nadir Shah.—In a magnificent hall erected for the purpose the crown of Persia was placed on the head of the Great Soldier at an hour selected by the leading astrologers as peculiarly auspicious. Nadir Shah, as he is termed henceforth, received the homage of his subjects seated on a jewel-encrusted throne, and in order to commemorate the occasion, coins were stamped bearing the following distich :

> By gold in all the earth his kingship shall be famed,
> Phoenix of Persia's land, World-conqueror, Sovereign named.[1]

Thus in pomp and splendour the Afshar shepherd, who by his military genius had freed Iran from the Afghans, the Turks, and other invaders, realized his dazzling ambition, and sat on the throne of Cyrus, of Noshirwan, and of Shah Abbas.

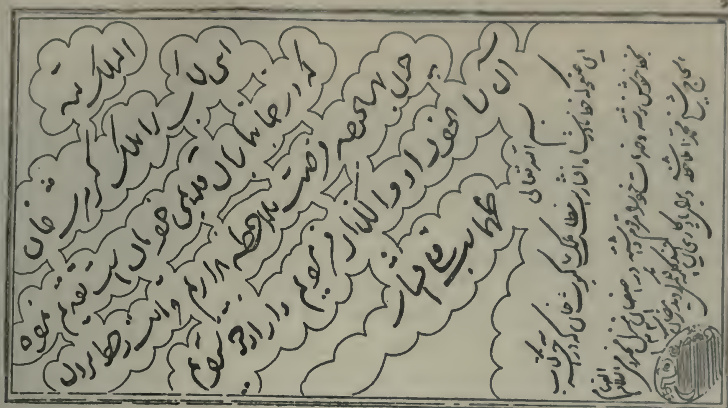
[1] The translation of this distich is taken from *The Coins of the Shahs of Persia*, by R. S. Poole.



From a photograph by H. K. Sykes.

A TYPICAL HILL VILLAGE ON THE PERSO-AFGHAN FRONTIER.

348a



Holograph Document signed by Tahmasp Kuli Afshar (Nadir Shah).
(Through the courtesy of Abdul Majid Belshah.)

[Purport.—Nadir acknowledges his indebtedness for the book (on which he has written these lines) to his General, Keiumars Khan. He adds that as he is too busy to read it himself he will return it to its author for the purpose.]

CHAPTER LXXI

THE CONQUESTS OF NADIR SHAH

We, whose wishes were for such a day, after appointing guards for our camp, and invoking the support of an all-powerful Creator, mounted and advanced to the charge. For two complete hours the action raged with violence and a heavy fire of cannon and musketry was maintained. After that, by the aid of the Almighty, our lion-hunting heroes broke the line of the enemy and chased them from the field of battle, dispersing them in every direction.—From Nadir Shah's own account of the Battle of Karnal.

The Punitive Expedition against the Bakhtiaris.—Nadir Shah had undoubtedly resolved on a career of conquest long before he ascended the throne. Apart from his ambition he must have realized that he owed his position to the army and that to maintain it further successes were necessary. Moreover, to pay a large standing force was beyond the resources of exhausted Iran.

The first expedition he undertook after his coronation was against the Bakhtiaris.[1] These tribesmen had a few

[1] Owing to the influence of the *Sirdar* Assad, who lived at Teheran as a hostage and, like Mir Vais, learned the weakness of the central government, the Bakhtiaris have played a leading and not unprofitable part in the recent struggles for constitutional government.

years previously killed their governor, and Nadir had invaded their country, which is described in the *Jahangusha* as follows: "If the pen of description wished to give an idea of the route, so steep and so difficult, it would be lost in the forest of astonishment and confounded in the desert of feebleness." On that occasion the savage Bakhtiaris, unable to resist the overwhelming forces employed, had submitted, and by way of punishment three thousand families had been transported to Khorasan. On the present occasion Nadir attacked another rebellious section of the tribe and led his troops into every corner and nook of the mountains. Probably realizing that the Bakhtiaris were driven to rob through poverty, as is the case to-day with the tribes on the north-west frontier of India, Nadir, after killing their chief and other prisoners, gave them better lands in a less inaccessible district. He also enrolled a body of their warriors in his army, a statesmanlike policy which proved conspicuously successful.

The Afghan Campaign, A.H. 1150–1151 (1737–1738).—Kandahar was governed by Husayn, brother of Mahmud the Captor of Isfahan. Being quite unable to meet Nadir's army of eighty thousand men in the field, he shut himself up in the city, which was strongly fortified, fully provisioned, and held by a large garrison. Nadir Shah, after reconnoitring the position, came to the conclusion that it was too strong to besiege without heavy guns, and decided on a blockade. This operation he carried out with great thoroughness. Round the city a line of towers was constructed, twenty-eight miles in circumference, and in these infantry armed with muskets were stationed, so that Kandahar was effectually cut off from the surrounding country. But the city held out for a year, and Nadir then resolved to take more active steps.

Kandahar stands on the face of a hill, and was defended by a wall and by a number of towers which constituted outworks. The besiegers made themselves masters of some of these towers, to which with immense difficulty they dragged up guns, the Bakhtiaris earning special distinction by capturing a large tower which was the key of the



From a photograph by Col. H. A. Sawyer.

A BAKHTIARI CHIEF.

position. Kandahar now lay at the mercy of Nadir, who treated it with statesmanlike moderation. He even enlisted a body of Afghans, who became some of his best and most faithful soldiers. Husayn fled, but afterwards surrendered and was interned in Mazanderan. Of the Ghilzais a large number were removed to the neighbourhood of Nishapur, whence Abdali nomads were brought to take their place in the Kandahar district.

The siege of Kandahar reflects no glory on Nadir Shah, who blockaded it for a year without attempting to take it by other means. The event proved it to be by no means impregnable, and it would have speedily succumbed to determined assaults.

The Expedition of Riza Kuli Mirza against Balkh.—During the blockade of Kandahar, Nadir's eldest son, Riza Kuli *Mirza*, was despatched from Khorasan with twelve thousand picked men to attack Balkh, whose chief had promised aid to Husayn. After a fierce assault, which lasted without intermission for three days and nights, the "Mother of Cities" surrendered. The Prince then crossed the Oxus and defeated an Uzbeg army forty thousand strong. Nadir thereupon recalled him, being unwilling to entangle himself in another campaign at this juncture, and wrote to the King of Bokhara that he had ordered his son not to disturb countries "which were the inheritance of the descendants of Chengiz Khan and of the race of the Turkoman."

The State of India in A.H. 1151 (1738).—During the tedious months which were spent in front of Kandahar, it is certain that Nadir frequently discussed an expedition against Delhi, which would be the natural sequel to a successful Afghan campaign. I therefore propose to devote a few words to the state of India.

The last great Moghul Emperor was Aurangzeb. At his death, in 1707, his empire stretched from Kabul to the Bay of Bengal. Indeed all India except the apex of the Deccan nominally obeyed him, although in the south his authority was limited to the forts and cities held by his garrisons. After his decease, the break up of the empire began. The elusive Marathas, who had foiled all

the efforts of Aurangzeb, steadily increased in power until even the Emperor had to pay them blackmail.

Mohamed Shah, the antagonist of Nadir, had succeeded to the throne in A.H. 1131 (1719). He was a worthless descendant of the Great Moghuls. Indolent and voluptuous, "never without a mistress in his arms and a glass in his hand," this despicable monarch was a sorry contrast to the virile Nadir, and his unwarlike troops were wholly unfit to face the Persian veterans. Treachery also is believed to have been at work, some of the leading nobles of India being in correspondence with Nadir and weakening the hands of the officers in command of the fortresses.

The Negotiations.—Nadir had apprized the Court of Delhi of his Afghan campaign and had requested that no fugitives should be allowed to find asylum across the frontier. His envoy, Ali Mardan, Shamlu, was informed that necessary instructions had been given to the officials concerned, and a second envoy received a similar reply. Nevertheless, fugitives freely escaped to Ghazni and Kabul, and it was evident that proper orders to prevent this had not been given. Nadir sent another envoy to remonstrate, but he was detained at Delhi. This was the state of affairs after the capture of Kandahar, and the Great Afshar, free now to move his army in any direction, despatched three fresh envoys with instructions to insist on a definite reply. Failing again, he wrote an indignant letter to the Emperor, but his messenger was killed by Valad Mir Abbas, the Governor of Jalalabad. The councillors of the Emperor, it would seem, failed to realize the seriousness of the position. They hoped that Kandahar would prove impregnable, and when it fell they felt certain that the Persian army would return to its own country, much as Mohamed Shah of Khwarazm had believed that the Mongol hordes would never cross the Oxus.

The Invasion of India.—From Kandahar Nadir marched north on Kabul, capturing Ghazni on the way. Kabul, the key to the Khyber Pass, which is the main land gate of India, offered a stout resistance, but was ultimately taken.

The booty was rich, and included not only arms and jewels, but money, which was of the utmost value as a means of paying the troops. After this success the movements of the invaders were slow, as they were delayed by the tribes inhabiting the neighbourhood of the Khyber Pass, but before the disunited weaklings of Delhi realized what was happening, Nadir had taken Peshawar and crossed the Indus at Attock.

The Battle of Karnal, A.H. 1151 (1738).—Mohamed Shah was by this time really alarmed, and, having collected what troops he could, he marched to the plain of Karnal, on the right bank of the Jumna, some sixty miles from Delhi. There he formed an entrenched camp and supinely awaited the invader, who swiftly marched across the Panjab.

Nadir recognized the strength of the position, and was in some doubt what course to pursue. Mohamed Shah, meanwhile, had received a reinforcement of thirty thousand men under Saadat Khan, one of the leading princes of India. Upon reporting his arrival to the Emperor he urged that battle must be given at once, to prevent the breaking up of the army from lack of supplies. Then, hearing that a detached force of six thousand Kurds was attacking and pillaging, Saadat Khan led his forces out and drove them off. On both sides reinforcements were hurried up and the engagement became general. Nadir employed his usual tactics of an ambush with much success, and Saadat Khan was defeated and taken prisoner. Another leading general was wounded, the elephants were frightened by fire-balls, and the vast Indian army was routed, though only a portion of the forces on either side had come into action.

Nadir's own description of the battle, in a letter written to his son, has most fortunately been preserved, and deserves to be quoted at some length.[1]

This battle lasted two hours; and for two hours and a half more were our conquering soldiers engaged in pursuit. When one hour of the day remained, the field was entirely cleared of the enemy; and as the entrenchments of their camp were strong, and

[1] *Vide* also the heading to this chapter.

the fortifications formidable, we would not permit our army to assault it.

An immense treasure, a number of elephants, part of the artillery of the Emperor, and rich spoils of every description were the reward of our victory. Upwards of twenty thousand of the enemy were slain on the field of battle, and a much greater number were made prisoners. Immediately after the action was over, we surrounded the Emperor's army, and took measures to prevent all communication with the adjacent country; preparing at the same time our cannon and mortars to level with the ground the fortifications which had been erected.

As the utmost confusion reigned in the imperial camp, and all discipline was abandoned, the Emperor, compelled by irresistible necessity, after the lapse of one day, sent Nizam-ul-Mulk, on Thursday, the seventeenth Zilkadeh (19th February), to our royal camp; and the day following, Mohamed Shah himself, attended by his nobles, came to our heavenlike presence, in an afflicted state.

When the Emperor was approaching, as we are ourselves of a Turkoman family, and Mohamed Shah is a Turkoman, and the lineal descendant of the noble House of Gurkan, we sent our dear son Nasrulla Khan beyond the bounds of our camp to meet him. The Emperor entered our tents and we delivered over to him the signet of our Empire. He remained that day a guest in our royal tent. Considering our affinity as Turkoman, and also reflecting on the honours that befitted the majesty of a king of kings, we bestowed such upon the Emperor, and ordered his royal pavilions, his family, and his nobles to be preserved: and we have established him in a manner equal to his great dignity.

Persians love to recount how Nadir, in boasting of his hardihood, swore to Mohamed Shah that during the whole campaign he had never changed his clothes. To prove the accuracy of his statement, he tore open his tunic to show his under garments, which were worn to pieces.

The Surrender of Delhi and its Spoils.—Nadir marched in triumph into Delhi, where he was entertained in the most sumptuous fashion by Mohamed Shah, who handed over to him the amassed wealth of his ancestors. Among the trophies was the celebrated Peacock Throne, described by Tavernier as follows:[1]

The largest throne, which is set up in the hall of the first

[1] Curzon (vol. i. pp. 317–22) proves that the Peacock Throne at Teheran was made during the reign of Fath Ali Shah.



NADIR SHAH ATTACKING MOHAMED SHAH.

(From a Persian picture.)

court, is in form like one of our field beds, six feet long and four broad. The cushion at the base is round like a bolster: the cushions on the sides are flat. The under part of the canopy is all embroidered with pearls and diamonds, with a fringe of pearls round about. Upon the top of the canopy, which is made like an arch with four panes, stands a peacock with his tail spread, consisting all of saphirs and other proper coloured stones. The body is of beaten gold enchas'd with several jewels, and a great ruby upon his breast, at which hangs a pearl that weighs fifty carats. On each side of the peacock stand two nosegays as high as the bird, consisting of several sorts of flowers, all of beaten gold enamelled. When the king seats himself on the throne there is a transparent jewel with a diamond appendant of eighty or ninety carats, encompass'd with rubies and emeralds, so hung that it is always in his eye. The twelve pillars also that uphold the canopy are set with rows of fair pearl, round, and of an excellent water, that weigh from six to ten carats of apiece. This is the famous throne which Tamerlane began and Cha Jehan finish'd, which is really reported to have cost 160 million and 500,000 livres of our money.

The value of the spoils was estimated at £87,500,000 by Hanway, and the lowest estimate was £30,000,000. In any case the sum was enormous and, had Nadir used it wisely for the support of his army and for public works, it would have proved the greatest blessing to impoverished Iran. As it was, it converted him into a miser, and Persia never benefited during his lifetime by these vast treasures, which after his death were mostly dissipated and lost.[1]

The Massacre.—An entirely peaceful ending to the campaign was disturbed by a rising in Delhi during the course of which some Persians were killed. Nadir attempted to quell the tumult but was obliged in the end to unleash his soldiers, who massacred and plundered and burned. Mohamed Shah interceded and the massacre was stopped, but not until part of the city had been destroyed by fire.

The Marriage of Nasrulla Khan.—To cement the alliance between the two monarchs, a daughter of the Moghul Emperor was married to Nasrulla, Nadir's

[1] Some years ago I purchased a coral necklace of Indian manufacture from an impoverished descendant of Nadir Shah. There is every reason to believe that it formed part of the spoils of Delhi.

second son. The story runs that an account of the bridegroom's pedigree for seven generations was demanded. The grim reply was: "He is son of Nadir Shah, the son of the sword, the grandson of the sword; and so on to seventy instead of seven generations."

The Results of the Campaign.—By this campaign of a few months Nadir struck a blow which resounded all over the world. Until then, though he had indeed gained victories, he had merely recovered lost provinces of the Persian Empire. In this fortunate expedition he had won the fabulous "wealth of Ind," and with it enduring fame. He showed the prudence of a statesman in replacing Mohamed Shah on the throne and threatening to attack any one who dared to disobey him. He realized that to hold Delhi was beyond his powers: at the same time he recovered all the provinces on the right bank of the Indus which had once formed part of the Persian Empire. Thus with power, fame, and wealth, the victor recrossed the Indus. On his march back to the Iranian plateau he readily paid blackmail to the tribes of the Khyber Pass in order to avoid all risk to his treasure, which he brought in safety to Kabul.

The Sind Expedition, A.H. 1151–1152 (1739).—The army remained for some time in the highlands of Afghanistan and the following winter was spent in an expedition into Sind, where Nadir wished to make good his possession of his newly acquired territories. He met with little or no resistance. Khudayar Khan Abbasi, against whom the campaign was chiefly directed, fled into the desert, but by means of a forced march on Amirkot he was induced to surrender. Abdul Karim mentions that when an inventory of his property was taken many articles looted by the Afghans at Isfahan were found. The conquered districts were divided into three provinces, and, after establishing his authority in them, the Great Afshar marched back to the uplands through Peshin and Kandahar. At Herat the army rested for forty days. Nadir Shah exhibited to wondering throngs the spoils of Delhi, including the celebrated Peacock Throne and a tent which is thus described: "The lining was of violet-coloured

satin, upon which were representations of all the birds and beasts in the creation, with trees and flowers, the whole made of pearls, diamonds, rubies, emeralds, amethysts, and other precious stones."[1] The victor also organized pageants and entertainments of every description.

The Campaign against Bokhara, A.H. 1153 (1740).—The campaign against the Uzbegs of Bokhara and Khiva was the corollary to a successful campaign in India. As mentioned in Chapter LXVI., these states were ruled by separate, but kindred, dynasties. From both countries hordes of raiders annually ravaged Khorasan : it was one of these bands which had, as already mentioned, carried off Nadir when a youth. As, moreover, they were unable to resist the Persian army, it is not difficult to divine the motives which induced the Conqueror of Delhi to add to his conquests.

The campaign was organized from Balkh, where large quantities of grain had been collected. These supplies were loaded into boats and the army marched down both banks of the Oxus to Charjui, where a bridge of boats was constructed across the river. Abul Fayz Khan, King of Bokhara, realizing that he was unable to resist the Persian veterans, submitted and proceeded to the camp of Nadir. The victor, after at first treating the descendant of Chengiz Khan with haughtiness and disdain, restored him to the throne on condition that the Oxus should, as in the days of old, constitute the boundary of Persia. The treaty was cemented by a double marriage, he himself espousing a sister, and his nephew a daughter, of the Bokharan monarch. Finally, in accordance with precedent, eight thousand Uzbegs were enlisted in the Persian army.

The Conquest of Khiva, A.H. 1153 (1740).—After successfully adding Bokhara to his list of conquests, Nadir Shah carried out his scheme of subduing Khiva. The Turkoman nearly succeeded in capturing the bridge of boats and destroying the convoy of grain on which the existence of the army depended, but by a forced march

[1] *Abdulkarreem*, p. 27.

they were forestalled. They fought desperately, and at one time it looked as if the Persian army, which was suffering from thirst, would be defeated, but Nadir rallied his troops and won the day. After this battle the army moved with precaution in four divisions, disposed to form advance, rear, and flanking guards, while the precious grain boats were protected by the artillery, escorted by a force of cavalry. The celebrated fortress of Hezar Asp was first besieged, but hearing that Ilbars Khan, the ruler of Khiva, was in the fort of Jayuk, Nadir relinquished the siege and surrounded the Khan, whom he forced to surrender. Before this campaign Nadir Shah had despatched ambassadors to the Khan of Khiva to demand the release of all Persians detained in slavery, but his envoys had been put to death except one, who was sent back in a mutilated condition. Ilbars Khan now had to pay the penalty for this act of savagery, and was put to death with twenty of his advisers. The people were not given over as a prey to the army, as it was realized that they were innocent.

Among the prisoners who were taken by Nadir on this campaign were two English members of Hanway's staff, Messrs. Thompson and Hogg, who were treated with much kindness, being given passports and promised redress in case of losses. Their travels and adventures, which certainly entitle them to a modest niche in the temple of fame, are given by Hanway. From a commercial point of view the enterprise was a failure, as there was little demand for their goods, and no profit was made commensurate with the great risks which were run.

A number of Persians and Russians, too, were freed from slavery. The former were settled in a village named Mauludgah, in the district of Darragaz, which Nadir gave orders to found in commemoration of the fact that it was his birthplace, as the word implies. From Abdul Kurreem we learn that the mosque he erected was surmounted by "three golden vases one upon another, and at the top of all is fixed a scimitar of the same metal, implying that the sword issued from hence." When I visited the ruins in 1913 I was informed that the founder



From a photograph by Major J. W. Watson.

THE TREASURE HOUSE OF NADIR SHAH.

of the Kajar dynasty had ordered the mosque and other buildings to be levelled to the ground.[1]

Nadir Shah at the Zenith of his Power.—From Khiva Nadir marched to his beloved Kalat, where he ordered the erection of a palace and of a treasure-house for the spoils of Delhi. He then proceeded to Meshed, where he duly celebrated his victories.

Nadir was now at the zenith of his fame and power. In five years he had defeated Ashraf and Husayn, the Ghilzai chiefs, and had taken Kandahar. The victory over Mohamed Shah and the capture of Delhi were a far more splendid feat of arms, and his conquests were completed by his successful campaigns against Bokhara and Khiva. Nor was this all. The Turks had been twice defeated and had restored her lost provinces to the Persian Empire, which once again stretched from the Oxus on the north to the Indus on the south—a realm far exceeding that of the Safavis. Had Nadir possessed any administrative capacity, he might, by employing the immense material resources at his command, have restored to Persia her prosperity and happiness. But his character was spoiled by success, and the remaining years of his life are a record of ever-increasing cruelty and avarice, which made him detested as a bloody tyrant by the very people whom he had freed from the intolerable Afghan yoke.

[1] I have been given some sheets which contain the accounts of the district of Darragaz for the year A.H. 1159 (1746). Among the items shown are charges on the land for the upkeep of the *Mauludgah* and of the grave of Imam Kuli. These documents have been presented by me to the Royal Asiatic Society.



NADIR SHAH.

CHAPTER LXXII

THE LAST YEARS OF NADIR SHAH

Who was it that restored the Persian Empire but the Persians; and who assisted the King to conquer India but the Persians? He has now a foreign force, and governs us with an army of Tartars.—A Persian's complaint to Hanway.

The Lesghian Campaign, 1741–1742.—In Iran the proverb runs, "If any Persian King is a fool, let him march against the Lesghians," a saying of which Nadir was destined to prove the truth. Inhabiting an uncultivated and almost inaccessible country in the recesses of Daghestan, these savage tribesmen raided Shirwan and other settled districts, and during the Indian campaign they killed Ibrahim Khan, the only brother of the Shah.

Nadir was bound in honour to avenge his death, and in the operations undertaken for this purpose he at first gained some advantage, his advance-guard composed of Afghans capturing a strong position. This success and the fame of Nadir caused certain sections of the tribe which inhabited less defensible country to submit, and they were transported with their families into Khorasan. Nadir then entered the Daghestan range, posting a force of eight thousand men to keep open his communications while the main body pursued the elusive Lesghians deeper and deeper among the densely timbered mountains. At length the tribesmen found their opportunity. They attacked both the army and the connecting force at a disadvantage, and inflicted heavy loss, even penetrating to the royal tent and carrying off some women and jewels.

Furious at being baffled, Nadir fought on desperately; but supplies failed and he was forced to retreat on Derbent, where his shattered army would have starved but for supplies shipped from Astrakhan. As Hanway points out, it was this bitter experience which proved to Nadir Shah the value of a fleet.

The Russian Government, alarmed by these operations, despatched a force, which encouraged the Lesghians to petition for Russian protection.[1] The Shah, realizing that he had failed and that this failure would raise up a host of enemies whom his supposed invincibility had hitherto kept in check, retired in a sullen and angry mood.

The Blinding of Riza Kuli Mirza.—Nadir had marched from the scene of the Meshed festivities to the province of Shirwan by Astrabad and Mazanderan, and while traversing the forests of this province he was assailed by two Afghans. The bullet which one of these men fired grazed his right arm, wounded his hand, and struck his horse in the head. The assassins escaped in the thick brakes. Nadir was led to believe, whether rightly or wrongly, that Riza Kuli *Mirza* was the instigator of the plot. The young Prince was questioned and promised pardon if he confessed, but he asserted his innocence, and upon the close of the Lesghian campaign he was blinded. The character of the Prince closely resembled that of his father; hearing on one occasion a rumour that Nadir had lost his life in India, he had put Shah Tahmasp to death and had begun to assume the state of a monarch. He was harshly treated by Nadir on his return and cherished deep resentment, and it is at any rate possible that he was guilty. On the other hand, Nadir was exasperated by his failure against the Lesghians and would not hesitate to condemn on mere suspicion. He afterwards undoubtedly regretted his act, and it is stated that he put to death all the spectators of the blinding, on the pretext that they should have offered their

[1] Hanway, iv. p. 226, gives a translation of the petition, which contains the following passage: "We are determined to hold the golden border of the Empress's imperial robes, and in spite of all the evils that may threaten us, we will not be dragged from them. . . ."

lives to save the eyes of a prince who was the glory of Persia. Persians still remember the saying attributed to the blinded Prince, "It is not my eyes which you have put out, but those of Persia."

Rebellions in Persia, 1743–1744.—The repulse of Nadir in Daghestan and the insecurity felt owing to his increasing cruelty were the chief causes of three rebellions which broke out in Shirwan, in Fars, and at Astrabad. In Shirwan, a pretender named Sam, who claimed to be a son of Shah Husayn, raised the country and with the aid of the Lesghians defeated a body of two thousand troops. Nadir detached a force of twenty-five thousand men, which after much hard fighting drowned the rebellion in blood. The Pretender was taken prisoner and deprived of one eye, and then sent to Constantinople with the following message: "Nadir disdains to take the life of so despicable a wretch, although the 'Grand Signior' has espoused his cause."[1]

The trouble at Shiraz arose out of the failure of Taki Khan, the Governor of Fars, in certain expeditions in the Persian Gulf. Hearing that he was in consequence to be sent a prisoner to the camp, he revolted, but an army of eighteen thousand men captured Shiraz and crushed the rebellion with awful severity. Taki Khan was taken and deprived of one eye, and his relations were put to death. The revolt of the Kajars of Astrabad will be referred to when we come to the adventures of Hanway. Mohamed Husayn Khan, their chief, was defeated by a force of only fifteen hundred men, and the Astrabad province was ruined by the executions and destruction of property, of which Hanway gives a most graphic description.

The Last Campaign against Turkey, 1743–1745.—The last campaign which Nadir fought against Turkey was due to the Sultan's refusal to recognize the Jafar sect, concerning which the following decision had been given by the religious leaders: "It is permitted to kill and to make prisoners of the people of Iran, and the new sect is contrary to the true belief." The Persian monarch had

[1] This is Hanway's account. In the *Jahangusha* a different message is given.

completely failed in his attempt to reunite the Persians with the Turks, and as he was hated by all good Shias his position was by no means enviable.

However, he was able to inflict one more crushing defeat on the Turks, who were encouraged by the internal state of Persia to risk another trial of strength. For a long time nothing decisive happened, the Turks acting on the defensive with success at Mosul, Kars and elsewhere, while the Persians lost thousands of men in unsuccessful assaults.

Finally, in A.H. 1158 (1745), a large Turkish army, under Yakan Mohamed Pasha, advanced from Kars prepared to fight a battle. Nadir, whose skill as a tactician had not been impaired, resolved to meet this great host on the same ground on which he had defeated Abdulla Pasha. The Turkish leader, advancing at the head of one hundred thousand cavalry and forty thousand infantry, halted close to the Persian army and fortified his camp. The next day the two armies met, and after a series of combats extending over four days the Persians gained a most decisive victory. The Turks were driven back to their camp, where they murdered their general, and then fled in hopeless disorder. Nadir captured the whole of the artillery and military stores, and many thousands of the enemy were killed or made prisoners. After this brilliant success fresh proposals for peace were made by the victors. Nadir agreed to waive his pretensions concerning the new sect, the prisoners were released, and peace was made on the terms fixed in the treaty with Murad IV.

The Pioneer Journeys of Elton, 1739–1742.—In Chapters LXII. and LXIV. an epitome was given of early efforts to trade with Persia across Russia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Peter the Great, realizing that his subjects were incapable of organizing commerce with Persia, made overtures to Englishmen to undertake the work, but with his death the scheme fell through. A few years later, in 1738, or just a century after the Holstein Mission, an attempt was made by John Elton to revive the scheme. This intrepid Englishman had

served the Russian Government in the Orenburg expedition, in which he had explored much unknown country; he had also made enquiries about trade with Khiva and Bokhara.

In 1739 Elton made a pioneer journey down the Volga, intending to proceed to Khiva and Bokhara; but, on learning that the Persians were invading those countries, he decided to ship his goods to Resht. There his reception was remarkably friendly. On the advice of the Persian governor he petitioned Riza Kuli *Mirza*, who was then Viceroy of Persia, for a *farman*, which was granted and couched in the most favourable terms. Elated at his success, Elton returned to England, where he painted in glowing language the prospects of the new opening and obtained strong support. He pointed out that Meshed was now the capital; that it was too far from the Persian Gulf for the operations of the East India Company, but was accessible from the Caspian Sea, and that it would also form an excellent entrepôt for trade with Khiva and Bokhara. Against these advantages had to be set the miserably poor state of exhausted Persia and the circumstance that this trade opening was not new, but was already used by the Armenians trading between Holland and Persia, who knew the language and customs of Persia and were hostile to the new-comers. Moreover, it was longer than the route *via* Aleppo, and was open for only half the year. On the other hand, the Armenians were oppressed with heavy illegal taxes which the Englishmen would escape, and practically no English cloth reached Northern Persia from Smyrna.

The necessary permission was obtained from the Russian Government, and two ships were built at Kazan and launched in 1742. Elton was in charge, with one Woodroofe in command of the ship; but soon after his arrival at Resht he quarrelled with the Russian Consul. In the following year, as the result of overtures made by the Persian authorities, Elton suddenly entered the service of Nadir Shah.

The Adventures of Jonas Hanway, 1743.—His acts had naturally disturbed the English factors at Petrograd, who

34a



JONAS HANWAY AND THE COLUMNS OF SKULLS NEAR ASTRABAD.

(From Jonas Hanway's *Historical Account of British Trade over the Caspian*, 1753, vol. i.)

realized that they would provoke Russian hostility, and Jonas Hanway was despatched to assume charge. Passing through Astrakhan, he found that the Russians were opposed to British activity, which threatened their own trade, the ships built at Kazan being greatly superior to anything which then sailed on the Caspian.

Hanway, after discussing the situation with Elton, decided to take his cargo to Astrabad and Meshed, and with this object sailed to Astrabad Bay. He reached Astrabad city without incident, but before he could leave it Mohamed Husayn Khan, the Kajar chief, seized the place. The Turkoman who had joined in the Kajar expedition, not content with receiving the Englishman's goods, asked for the merchants as slaves to tend their sheep! The Kajar Khan, however, saved Hanway from this fate and he was permitted to leave Astrabad. He determined to seek justice from Nadir Shah, and having with the utmost difficulty traversed Mazanderan he returned to Langar Rud, where Elton befriended him, and to Resht, where he refitted for the onward journey. He reached the royal camp at Hamadan safely, and was readily granted an order for the restitution of his goods, or, in default, for payment of their value. This necessitated a second journey to Astrabad, where Hanway was a witness of the awful punishments meted out to the rebels and saw two pyramids of piled-up heads.

The Closing of British Trade across the Caspian, 1746.—The Russian Government was alarmed, and not without reason, at Elton's action, and as a first step stopped the consignment of goods to him across Russia. In vain the Russian Company made handsome offers to the wayward Englishman if he would quit Persia. By way of response he procured an order from Nadir in 1745 forbidding his departure.

In the following year the Russian Government issued a decree absolutely prohibiting the British trade across the Caspian and assigning Elton's behaviour as the reason. This was the death-blow to the venture. In the following year, after the murder of Nadir Shah, the factory at Resht was plundered of goods to the value of £80,000, for which

restitution was never made. The factors left Resht, and thus ended in failure the second attempt to trade with Persia across Russia, although as in the case of the earlier venture our annals are enriched by the achievements of Englishmen such as Hanway, Elton, and Woodroofe, who won fame as explorers and pioneers.

The Naval Ambitions of Nadir Shah.—No better illustration can be found of the influence of physical conditions on character than the invincible repugnance to the sea which the Persians, who are cut off from it by mountain barriers, have always shown, a repugnance which is as strong to-day as when Hafiz gave up his voyage to India. Nadir Shah deserves credit for being the first monarch of Persia who realized the value of a fleet, and his naval policy was strenuously supported by his Admiral of the Coast, although that officer, when appointed, had never seen a ship. In January 1743, Elton was appointed Chief Naval Constructor and given the title of Jamal Beg.[1]

Not content with merely building ships, Elton, under the instructions of his royal master, surveyed the east coast of the Caspian as far north as Cheleken Island.[2] Nadir's plan was to keep in check the Turkoman pirates and to strengthen the claims of Persia along this coast by the establishment of a fortified position. Moreover, he hoped by means of a fleet to be able to supply his troops when operating against the Lesghians, and, as Hanway puts it, "the ambition of sharing the trade and Sovereignty of the Caspian might also be a concurring inducement."

Elton was a genius. Making his headquarters at Langar Rud, the port of Lahijan, in a pestilential climate, he set to work to overcome all difficulties. Timber was hewn and brought down to the coast; sail-cloth was woven of cotton, and cords were twisted from flax. Anchors, not being procurable locally, were fished for. The local population, working without pay, was bitterly hostile to the new forced labour, but Elton, with only one English carpenter, a few Russians, and a few Indians, launched

[1] The Turki form is "Gemal," and it must be remembered that Turki was Nadir's mother-tongue.

[2] Captain Woodroofe's interesting account is given in Hanway, i. 130-38. On p. 161, Nadir's plans are set forth and reference is made to the energy displayed by Elton.

a ship mounting twenty three-pounders. The Russian Government viewed this naval activity in the interests of Nadir Shah with open hostility, but Elton stayed on after the assassination of his master until he was shot in a local rebellion, in 1751. After his death the whole scheme perished.

In the Persian Gulf, too, Nadir made a bid for sea-power. He collected a fleet of twenty vessels manned by Portuguese and Indians, which made the power of Persia a reality instead of a shadow in those waters. He also built a dockyard and at terrible cost in human suffering transported timber right across Persia for the use of his shipwrights. Here again, after assassination had removed the master-mind, the Persian fleet ceased to exist, and only a half-finished ship, referred to by later travellers, remained to prove that a dockyard had once existed.

The Assassination of Nadir Shah, A.H. 1160 (1747).—The last years of the reign of Nadir Shah are described in the partial pages of the *Jahangusha* as exceeding in barbarity all that has been recorded of the most blood-thirsty tyrants. Wherever he passed he constructed pyramids of heads and drove the miserable remnant of his subjects to inhabit caves and desert places. There was an almost general rebellion against the tyrant. Ali Kuli Khan, his nephew, who had been deputed to reduce Sistan, joined the Sistanis and proclaimed himself Shah, thereby increasing the anarchy of the kingdom. Among others, the Kurds of Kuchan rebelled. Nadir marched on Kuchan, and in his camp, two *farsakhs* away, met his fate at the hands of one of his own tribesmen. There is no reason to doubt that his assailants acted in self-preservation, having heard that they were to be seized and put to death. The Shah's tents were pitched on a low mound,—which has been pointed out to me,—and late at night Mohamed Salah Khan and Mohamed Kuli Khan Afshar entered the royal enclosure. After a search they discovered and attacked Nadir, who died fighting. Although surprised in his sleep, he killed two of the assassins before Salah Khan, the captain of the guard, struck him to the ground.

His Character.—The character of Nadir Shah is not

difficult to analyse. Endowed with splendid physique, a fine appearance, a voice of thunder, dauntless courage and resolution, he was a born leader of men, and with his battle-axe he hewed his way to fame. He had a marvellous memory and abundant virility and he proved himself a great tactician. Generous at first, and, as we learn from Abraham of Crete, ready to overlook errors, he became a miser after securing the spoils of Delhi. Moderate in his early campaigns and averse from needless bloodshed, he was possessed later on with an unquenchable thirst for blood. As *Mirza* Mehdi states, the repulse by the Lesghians and, still more, the blinding of his son drove him into the awful excesses by which he is remembered.

Bred a Sunni, he showed intense hostility to the Shia religious leaders and confiscated the huge revenues which they enjoyed. He attempted to reunite Islam by the abolition of the Shia doctrine, but was wholly unsuccessful. Later he dreamed of founding a new religion, and with this end in view had translations made of both the Jewish Scriptures and the New Testament.

As an administrator, too, he failed completely. Although ready to punish injustice with severity, he did not realize that in order to secure his position he must restore content and prosperity to Persia. He remitted three years' taxes in celebration of his victory in India, but afterwards, with incredible folly, cancelled this decree and ordered the collection of every farthing. Hanway describes how his couriers were a curse to the country and how villages were everywhere fortified to resist their entrance. Indeed, the whole of victorious Iran was laid waste as if by an enemy and the population disappeared. To the millions hoarded at Kalat other sums were added, and all jewels were seized on the pretext that they must have been stolen at Delhi. Had Nadir been wise enough to unlock the doors of his treasure-house and support his army on the millions acquired in India, prosperity would quickly have returned to Iran and his dynasty might have endured.

Sir Mortimer Durand has pointed out the curious similarity between Nadir, the last great conqueror in Asia,

and Napoleon, the last great conqueror in Europe, both in the extent of their conquests and in their deterioration of character as a consequence of unbridled power. Had Nadir Shah died after the campaigns in India, Bokhara, and Khiva, he would have been the national hero for all time. Unfortunately he lived to become justly hated by the nation which he had saved from dismemberment.



Karim Khan.

CHAPTER LXXIII

THE SHORT-LIVED ZAND DYNASTY

It is pleasing to recount the actions of a chief, who, though born in an inferior rank, obtained power without crime, and who exercised it with a moderation that was, in the times in which he lived, as singular as his justice and humanity.—Sir John Malcolm on Karim Khan.

Ahmad Khan, Durrani.—The assassination of Nadir Shah was a signal for the break up of his composite army. The act of the conspirators was approved of by all its leaders except Ahmad Khan, Durrani, who commanded the Afghan and Uzbeg contingents. With this force, ten thousand strong, the Afghan chief sought to avenge his fallen leader, but he was defeated and retreated to Kandahar, where he founded a kingdom. The sinews of war he obtained by the fortunate capture of a treasure convoy containing part of the spoils of Delhi, and among the jewels seized on this occasion was the famous diamond known as the Kuh-i-Nur, or "Mountain of Light," which now adorns the crown of the British sovereign. Ahmad Khan reduced the whole of Afghanistan and took both Herat and Meshed. He also invaded India repeatedly and annexed Kashmir, Sind, and part of the Panjab. He even held Delhi for a time. His great feat of arms was the defeat of the Marathas at Panipat in A.D. 1761.

Adil Shah, A.H. 1160–1161 (1747–1748).—Ali Kuli, nephew of Nadir, succeeded him on the throne under the title of Adil Shah, or "The Just." His first act was to issue a proclamation in which he accepted responsibility for the murder of a tyrant who "delighted in blood and,

with unheard-of barbarity, made pyramids of heads of his own subjects."[1] He despatched a force to Kalat-i-Nadiri which massacred all the members of the family of the Great Afshar and seized upon his treasures. An exception was made in favour of Shah Rukh *Mirza*, a boy of fourteen, who was the son of the unfortunate Riza Kuli by Fatima, daughter of Shah Husayn. Adil Shah, after a short, inglorious reign, was dethroned and blinded by his brother Ibrahim, who in turn was defeated, made prisoner by his own troops, and put to death when on the way to Meshed. Adil Shah was also put to death.

Shah Rukh.—Shah Rukh then ascended the throne. It might have been thought that his descent and noble qualities would have made his rule universally acceptable in Persia, but a rival appeared in the person of *Mirza Sayyid* Mohamed, son of a leading doctor of the law of Meshed. This *mujtahid*[2] had married a sister of Shah Husayn, and his son, by raising the cry that Shah Rukh intended to continue his grandfather's policy of subverting the Shia doctrine, collected a force which defeated that of Shah Rukh. The monarch was taken prisoner and blinded; but Yusuf Ali, his general, in whose absence he had been overpowered, appeared on the scene, seized the pretender, who had taken the name of Sulayman, and after blinding him put him and his two sons to death.

Shah Rukh was restored to the throne, with Yusuf Ali as Regent. Very shortly after this settlement two chiefs, Mir Alum Khan and Jafar Khan, commanding respectively a body of Arabs and a body of Kurds, defeated Yusuf Ali, and of course blinded him, while the ill-starred Shah Rukh was relegated to prison. Needless to say the two chiefs speedily quarrelled, Mir Alum was the victor, and the vanquished Jafar Khan was added to the long list of blind men.

Ahmad Shah, who had rapidly consolidated his power, had advanced from Sistan on Herat in A.D. 1749. Shah Rukh had despatched Yusuf Ali to meet him, and it was during his absence on this duty that the Shah had been

[1] Hanway, ii. p. 451.
[2] *Mujtahid* signifies literally "one who strives (after knowledge)."

defeated and captured. Ahmad Shah after occupying Herat marched against Meshed. Mir Alum met him, but was defeated and killed, and Meshed surrendered. With a moderation both rare and sagacious, Ahmad Shah, after adding Herat and Sistan to his kingdom, decided to constitute Khorasan a separate state under Shah Rukh, but acknowledging Afghan suzerainty. The Afghans, it is interesting to note, have never forgotten that the Pul-i-Abrisham, or "Bridge of Silk," some seventy miles to the west of Sabzawar on the Meshed-Teheran road, was once the western boundary of their empire.

The Origin of the Kajar Tribe.—The Kajar tribe is of Turkish origin. Settled for a long time in Armenia, it was brought to Persia by Tamerlane. As already mentioned, it was one of the Kizilbash tribes which supported the Safavi dynasty. Shah Abbas divided the Kajars into three sections. Of these, one was established at Merv, a second in Georgia, and the third—which was subdivided into the Yukhari-bash and Ashagha-bash, or "upper" and "lower" branches—on the River Gurgan. It is with the Gurgan section alone that we are concerned.

The head of the "upper branch" was looked upon as the chief of the whole tribe until Fath Ali Khan became the Commander-in-Chief of Shah Tahmasp, and when holding this appointment transferred the chieftainship to the "lower branch."

Mohamed Husayn Khan, Kajar.—Upon the assassination of Fath Ali Khan by Nadir, that general naturally favoured the upper branch, and Mohamed Husayn Khan, son of Fath Ali Khan, fled to the Turkoman. By their aid he for a time occupied Astrabad and incidentally looted Hanway's goods, as mentioned in the previous chapter; but until the death of Nadir Shah he was unable to effect anything of importance. Upon the assassination of that tyrant he raised a force with which he opposed Ahmad Shah successfully and occupied the Caspian provinces. He was thus in a position to fight for the throne.

Azad the Afghan and Mardan Ali Khan, Bakhtiari.—Azerbaijan was at this time occupied by Azad, one of Nadir's Afghan generals, who after warring with the

372a



From a photograph by Col. H. A. Sawyer.

A BRIDGE ACROSS THE RIVER KARUN.

Prince of Georgia had made a treaty of peace, by the terms of which the Aras was to serve as the boundary of Persia. In Southern Persia another pretender was Ali Mardan, a Bakhtiari chief, who obtained possession of Isfahan in the name of a puppet Safavi prince termed Ismail, and placed him on the throne.

Karim Khan, Zand.—A fourth pretender was Karim Khan, son of Aymak of the Zand, a section of the Lak tribe.[1] Born to no high position, Karim had served Nadir as a soldier without special distinction. He often told how, being in want, he had stolen a gold-embossed saddle from a saddler's shop, but learning that the saddler had been sentenced to be hanged on account of its loss, he was conscience-stricken and restored it ; and he heard with pleasure the prayer of the saddler's wife that the man who brought the saddle back might live to have a hundred gold-embossed saddles. At the period to which this anecdote relates Karim was evidently a private soldier, but when we first hear of him at Isfahan he had, by sheer force of character, risen to power, and had joined the Bakhtiari chief on equal terms. As invariably happened in such combinations, jealousies arose and Ali Mardan marked down the Zand for death. The latter, however, rode off with his following, and shortly after the rupture the Bakhtiari was assassinated. Karim Khan thereupon became the sole ruler of Southern Persia, and by his kindness, generosity, and justice won all hearts.

The Triangular Contest for Power.—The position in Persia was extremely curious. Khorasan was left in the undisturbed possession of Shah Rukh, while Karim Khan, Mohamed Husayn Khan, and Azad fought for the throne. Each in turn seemed likely to win, but the final victory lay with the popular Zand chief.

The opening battle was fought between the Zand and the Kajar on the borders of Mazanderan. After a hot contest the Kajar won, but was unable to pursue owing to the advance of the Afghan. The latter had invaded Gilan, but on hearing of the victory of the Kajar retreated.

[1] This ancient Aryan tribe has its pastures in the vicinity of Shiraz. I met a section to the south of Kerman, *vide Ten Thousand Miles, etc.*, p. 428.

Meanwhile Karim Khan had reorganized his forces and prepared to attack, not Mohamed Husayn Khan as might be supposed, but Azad. The Afghan shut himself up in Kazvin and from this centre was able to drive off the Zand chief. Again Karim Khan retired on Isfahan and again he advanced. On this occasion, in A.H. 1166 (1752), he was defeated and was pursued right across Persia, past Isfahan, to Shiraz. Even at his capital he was unable to find refuge; but, fleeing towards Bushire, he induced Rustam Sultan, chief of Kisht, to come to his rescue. On one of the difficult "ladders" of the Bushire road, known as the Kotal-i-Kamarij, the Afghans pursued Karim Khan, who awaited them in the valley below. No sooner were they entangled in the almost perpendicular descent than Rustam Sultan attacked them. The Afghans, caught in a trap, fought bravely; but their army was almost annihilated, some fugitives alone escaping, and Karim Khan, reinforced by the Arab chiefs, was soon back at Shiraz.

The Final Campaign, A.H. 1171 (1757).—The defeat of Azad was followed by a campaign in Azerbaijan, in the course of which the Kajar captured the chief centres of the province. Azad disappeared from the list of pretenders, and after having been for some time a fugitive, surrendered to Karim Khan. The extraordinary confidence in the high character of his rival which this surrender showed was fully justified, for Azad was treated with the utmost kindness and generosity.

In the following year Mohamed Husayn Khan marched south against the Zand chief with a strong army fresh from victories in Azerbaijan, and the prize seemed within his grasp. Karim Khan, unable to meet him in the field, held Shiraz, and harassed the foraging parties of the invaders. He had carefully provisioned the city, but had laid the neighbourhood waste. He then applied himself to corrupting the leaders of the Kajar army, and with such success that Mohamed Husayn Khan, deserted by contingent after contingent, was forced to retire without fighting a single engagement. The last blow in the campaign was struck by Shaykh Ali Khan, under whom served the picked troops of the Zand chief. Mohamed

374a



KARIM KHAN, ZAND.

(From an engraving after an original Persian painting in Sir John Malcolm's *History of Persia*, 1815, vol. ii.)

Husayn Khan was at a disadvantage owing to a quarrel with the chief of the rival branch of the Kajars, which reduced his strength. Forced to fight, he held his ground as long as there was any hope, and then attempted to escape, but was recognized by the chief of the upper branch, who pursued and killed him. This ended the triangular duel between the three claimants, from which Karim Khan by reason of his personal popularity emerged victorious, although frequently unsuccessful in the field.

The Reign of Karim Khan, A.H. 1163–1193 (1750–1779).—The total length of Karim Khan's reign was twenty-nine years, and for over twenty he was undisputed ruler of Persia. He refused the title of Shah—the puppet Ismail was kept in captivity at Abadeh—and termed himself *Vakil*, or Regent. Shiraz was his capital, and the fine buildings, of which it still boasts, were all erected by him.

Of his justice, his sense of humour, and his kindliness, I heard many instances when living at Shiraz, where his name is still loved and revered. To give a single instance, he was so anxious that his subjects should be happy that if in any quarter of the town no music was heard he invariably inquired what was wrong, and paid musicians to play there. To quote a Persian writer, "The inhabitants of Shiraz enjoyed the most perfect tranquillity and happiness. In the society of moon-faced damsels they passed their leisure hours ; the sparkling goblet circulated ; and love and pleasure reigned in every breast." In close touch with the people, affecting no state and yet shrewd and capable, Karim Khan gave exhausted Iran two decades of sorely needed rest, and when he died at a great age the homely Zand chief was genuinely and deeply mourned.[1]

The Occupation of Kharak by the Dutch.—During the anarchy that prevailed in Persia the Dutch Government, whose representative, Baron Kniphausen, had been ill-treated and imprisoned at Basra, seized the island of Kharak at the head of the Persian Gulf. This act enabled Kniphausen to blockade the Shatt-ul-Arab and compel the Governor of Basra to make full amends for his mis-

[1] In *A Tour to Sheeraz*, by E. S. Waring (1808), an interesting account is given of Karim Khan and the later Zand Princes.

conduct. Thanks to Dutch protection, the barren island became a thriving emporium and the population of one hundred poverty-stricken fishermen expanded into a prosperous town of twelve thousand inhabitants. The Dutch held Kharak for some years until it was taken from them by a notorious pirate, Mir Mohanna of Bandar Rig, after which its prosperity and its population alike disappeared.

The Foundation of the English Factory at Bushire, A.D. 1763.—The Afghan invasion and the period of confusion that followed were responsible for the closing of most of the European factories in Persia, and some of them were not reopened. The British factory at Bandar Abbas was closed in 1761 owing to the extortions of the Governor of Lar, and in 1763 Bushire, the port of Shiraz, was selected as a new centre for commercial activity. Karim Khan was anxious to foster this British trade, and his *farman*, of which I give a copy,[1] was highly favourable in its terms. In 1770 Bushire was relinquished in favour of Basra, but three years later it was reoccupied, the factory at Basra being retained with it. Since that date Bushire has been the chief centre of British activity in the Persian

[1] Royal Grant from Karim Khan, King of Persia, conferring various Privileges on the English, and granting Permission to them to establish a Factory at Bushire, and to Trade in the Persian Gulf. Schyrash, 2nd July, 1763.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Art. 1. "The English Company may have as much ground, and in any part of Bushire, as they choose to build a factory on, or at any other port in the Gulf. They may have as many cannon mounted on it as they choose, but not to be larger than 6 pounds bore; and they may build factory-houses in any part of the kingdom they choose."

(2) No Customs' Dues to be Levied on Goods Imported or Exported at Bushire or elsewhere.

(3) No other European nation to Import Woollen Goods.

(4) Payment of Debts due to English Merchants and others.

(5) Right of English to Buy and Sell Goods.

(6) Prohibition against Clandestine Trade.

(7) Wrecks.

(8) Religious Liberty.

(9) Surrender of Deserters.

(10) Exemption of Brokers, Servants, and others belonging to Factories from Payment of Taxes or Imposts.

(11) "Wherever the English are, they shall have a spot of ground allotted them for a Burying Ground; and if they want a spot for a Garden, if the King's property, it shall be given them gratis; if belonging to any private person, they must pay a reasonable price for it."

(12) "The House that formerly belonged to the English Company at Schyrash I now re-deliver to them, with the garden and water thereto belonging."

Quoted from *Hertslet's Treaties*, p. 11.



From a photograph by Sir P. Z. Cox, K.C.I.E., C.S.I.

376a

SHIRAZ FROM THE GARDEN OF THE IMPERIAL BANK OF PERSIA.

Gulf. The trade was at first miserably small, only one ship being despatched annually from Bombay, and until 1790 the establishment was maintained at an annual loss; but from that date onward trade increased by leaps and bounds.

The Expedition Against Basra, A.H. 1189–1190 (1775–1776).—Karim Khan engaged in an expedition against Basra, mainly in order to occupy and pay his army; though he put forward the flimsy pretext that pilgrims to the sacred sites were taxed. The place was taken by Sadik Khan, brother of the Regent, after a blockade of thirteen months. He treated the citizens justly, and was particularly friendly to the British Resident. No attempt seems to have been made by the Turks to recover Basra, but upon the death of Karim Khan a few years later it was evacuated by the Persians and fell again into their hands.

Zaki Khan.—Upon the death of the *Vakil* in 1779, furious rivalries and ambitions were again unchained. Not only was the Zand family weakened by family feuds and assassinations, but the long struggle for power between it and the Kajar dynasty was renewed—a struggle which ended in the victory of the Kajars, who have ever since remained the ruling family of Iran. Besides his brother Sadik Khan, the captor of Basra, Karim Khan had also a half-brother on his mother's side named Zaki Khan. This man had once rebelled and had been pardoned. He was subsequently appointed to command an expedition to Damghan, where Husayn Kuli Khan,[1] Kajar, had revolted. This rising he quelled with barbarous cruelty, fastening his prisoners to stakes and then "planting" them head foremost in the ground. He had displayed similar ferocity elsewhere, and in consequence his name was both feared and execrated all over Persia.

After the death of Karim Khan, Zaki Khan at once usurped the government. A number of the Zand chiefs seized the Shiraz fort and declared for Abul Fatteh Khan, son of the *Vakil*. Zaki Khan, who was supported by his nephew Ali Murad, also declared for Abul Fatteh, and on the strength of this made terms with the chiefs in the fort;

[1] Husayn Kuli Khan was the father of Fath Ali Shah.

but the moment they surrendered he handed them over to the executioner.

Sadik Khan, who evacuated Basra upon hearing of the death of his brother, was prepared to fight for the throne ; but when Zaki gave out that he would kill the families of Sadik's adherents in Shiraz his army deserted him, and he fled to the fort of Bam in the Kerman province.

Zaki Khan, freed from internal troubles, sent Ali Murad with a picked force to operate against the Kajar Pretender Aga Mohamed, who was destined to found a dynasty ; but the young Prince, disgusted with Zaki, persuaded his troops to rebel and seized Isfahan in the name of Karim Khan's heir. Zaki Khan immediately collected a force and marched on Isfahan. At the picturesque village of Yazdikhast he claimed from the inhabitants a sum of money which they were charged with having hidden ; and upon their denying all knowledge of the matter he sentenced eighteen of the leading villagers to be thrown down the precipice on which the fort stands. He then sent for a *Sayyid*, or descendant of the Prophet, whom he charged with being concerned in the same matter, and although he protested his innocence he in turn was stabbed and thrown over the precipice, while his wife and daughter were given over to the tender mercies of the soldiers. That night Zaki Khan was assassinated by his own officers.

Abul Fatteh, Ali Murad, and Sadik.—Abul Fatteh, a weak and unambitious youth, was now placed on the throne, but his uncle Sadik, returning from Bam, conspired against him and blinded him. Ali Murad, who had appeared again on the scene, fought at first in the interests of Abul Fatteh, but subsequently avowed himself a claimant for the throne. A force under Sadik Khan's son, Ali Naki, defeated and dispersed the army of Ali Murad ; whereupon the young Prince, intoxicated with this easy success, wasted his time in the palaces of Isfahan while Ali Murad was collecting a formidable army. In a second battle, fought near Hamadan, Ali Murad gained a complete victory ; he then marched on Shiraz, which he blockaded for eight months and took in A.H. 1195 (1781). Upon its capture Sadik Khan was put to death, together with all his sons

except Jafar, who had previously made terms with the Conqueror.

The Reign of Ali Murad, A.H. 1196–1199 (1782–1785).—Ali Murad was now ruler of Persia and transferred the seat of government to Isfahan. From this centre he directed operations against the Kajars. At first his son Shaykh Ovays was successful, capturing Sari and defeating the Kajar chief. But the commander sent in pursuit of the beaten foe became entangled in the defiles, and his force was cut to pieces. This disaster threw the main body into a panic, Sari was abandoned, and Mazanderan was evacuated in disorder.

Ali Murad, after punishing the runaways, raised a second army for operations in Mazanderan, which he was supporting in person when he heard that Jafar had revolted and was marching on Isfahan from Zanjan. Although he was ill and the season was mid-winter, Ali Murad insisted on returning to Isfahan, but died on the road at Murchikhar, the scene of the second defeat of the Afghans by Nadir. Ali Murad was highly thought of by Aga Mohamed, who used to say, "Let us wait until that respectable, blind man (Ali Murad had lost one of his eyes) is out of the way, and then, but not before, we may succeed if we advance into Irak."

Jafar, A.H. 1199–1203 (1785–1789).—Jafar now came forward on the pretence of restoring order and invited Shaykh Ovays to Isfahan to ascend the throne. With extraordinary folly the young Prince trusted the man whose father had been murdered by his own father, and entered Isfahan ahead of his army. There he was seized and blinded.

The protagonists in the struggle for the throne of Persia were now Aga Mohamed and Jafar. The former marched south as far as Kashan and after defeating the army sent against him advanced on Isfahan. On his approach Jafar fled to Shiraz. Aga Mohamed now abandoned his true objective for minor operations in the Bakhtiari country, from which in the end he was driven back in disorder to Teheran. Jafar thereupon marched north again and retook Isfahan. He then engaged in a

campaign against his cousin Ismail Khan, who had revolted while filling the post of Governor of Hamadan, but was defeated in A.H. 1201 (1786) and forced to retire. He also failed in an attack on Yezd, whose Governor received aid from Tabas, a semi-independent district of Khorasan. Aga Mohamed, having meanwhile united all the sections of his tribe, again drove Jafar out of Isfahan and followed him to Shiraz, but being unable to capture that city, returned to Isfahan. Jafar detached his son Lutf Ali to subdue the province of Lar; this he accomplished and then proceeded to Kerman. Isfahan was taken once again, and once again abandoned, and Jafar retired finally to Shiraz. There, as the result of a conspiracy, poisoned food was given to him, and, the prisoners having been released, his death was hastened by a more summary form of assassination.

The Accession of Lutf Ali Khan.—Lutf Ali was now obliged to flee from his own army at Kerman to escape his father's fate. He took refuge with the Arab chief of Bushire, thanks to whose support he was enabled to enter Shiraz. There he put to death *Sayyid* Murad, its Governor, who had declared himself King, and then ascended the throne. Shortly afterwards Aga Mohamed marched south and was attacked by the young Prince, who, however, was soon compelled to retire on Shiraz owing to the defection of one of his contingents. As before, Shiraz remained impregnable and Aga Mohamed returned to Teheran.

The Expedition of Lutf Ali against Kerman, A.H. 1205 (1790).—In the following year Aga Mohamed was engaged in a campaign in Azerbaijan, and Lutf Ali, unwilling, if not unable, to support the forces he had collected at the expense of the province of Fars, marched against Kerman. Its Governor agreed to pay revenue and to submit, but declined to appear in the royal camp. Lutf Ali refused to accept this partial submission and besieged Kerman; but the winter was unusually severe, and lack of supplies forced him to raise the siege and retire.

Haji Ibrahim.—One of the striking personalities of the period—he may even be termed a King-Maker—was *Haji*

380a



LUTF ALI KHAN.

(From a picture in the Palace at Shiraz.)

(Taken from Sir Harford Jones Brydges' *Mission to Persia.*)

Ibrahim, son of *Haji* Hashim, a magistrate of Shiraz. He had rendered good service to Jafar by securing the adhesion of his native city when the Zand chief had fled from Isfahan, and had been rewarded by appointment as *Kalantar*[1] of Fars, a position which is still held by his family. Upon the assassination of Jafar, *Haji* Ibrahim won over the Shirazis to the side of Lutf Ali, who consequently owed to him his throne. Lutf Ali was noted before his accession for kindness of heart and generosity, and these qualities, combined with his unrivalled skill as a leader and man-at-arms, caused him to be beloved by all; but upon securing the throne he became imperious and overbearing. During his absence in Kerman many charges had been made against *Haji* Ibrahim, who was a strong and astute personality somewhat after the type of Bismarck, and whose services to his master were dangerous by reason of their magnitude. The case which convinced him that it would be imprudent to continue to serve Lutf Ali was that of a certain *Mirza* Mehdi, an army accountant who had been convicted of embezzlement by Jafar and sentenced to lose his ears. When Jafar had been assassinated his head was cut off and thrown from the citadel, and it was alleged against *Mirza* Mehdi that he had avenged himself by cutting off the ears from his master's head. *Haji* Ibrahim, affirming that he did not believe the report, had persuaded Lutf Ali to pardon the man, and even to bestow upon him a robe of honour. Jafar's widow reproached her son for this treatment of a man guilty of so great an insult to the dead Jafar, and thereupon Lutf Ali, in a hasty moment, condemned him to be flung into a fire. *Haji* Ibrahim himself informed Malcolm that this was the reason for his desertion of Lutf Ali; but it is more probable that his treachery had a personal motive, in the desire to be dissociated from a losing cause.

His Successful Plot.—In A.H. 1205 (1791) Lutf Ali marched north to meet the army of Aga Mohamed, and *Haji* Ibrahim took advantage of his absence from Shiraz

[1] *Kalantar* signifies Chief Civil Magistrate. The *Kawam-ul-Mulk* is the title now borne by the head of the family. In a poem by Hafiz reference is made to *Haji* Kawam-u-Din and the late *Kawam-ul-Mulk* quoted the verse to me and stated that it referred to his ancestor. This, however, is denied in some quarters.

to seize the commanders of the garrison and of the citadel. He then communicated with one of his brothers, who excited a mutiny in the army. Lutf Ali, deserted by his officers, retired on Shiraz, which he hoped to recover, but he was deserted by all his soldiers and forced to flee to the coast. The Shaykh of Bushire who had formerly befriended him was dead, and his successor was hostile, but, nothing daunted, he collected a small force at Bandar Rig, and after defeating first the Shaykh of Bushire and then the Governor of Kazerum reappeared before Shiraz.

The Campaigns of Lutf Ali Khan against Aga Mohamed.—The military qualities of Lutf Ali Khan shone brilliantly in the unequal struggle that followed. He was first victorious over a force detached by Aga Mohamed to support *Haji* Ibrahim at Shiraz. A powerful army sent to avenge this disaster had actually defeated the Zand Prince, when, rallying his men, he charged the Kajar troops who were looting his camp and turned his reverse into a decisive victory. Aga Mohamed at length took the field in person with his main force, but the gallant Lutf Ali charged and scattered the advance-guard. Then by night he penetrated the Kajar army, which partially dispersed, and he would have entered the royal tent, but, being assured that his enemy had fled, he decided to await the dawn in order to make sure of the treasure. To his dismay the *Muezzin* sounded the call to prayer, which proved that Aga Mohamed had not fled, and, his Arabs having scattered in search of plunder, the ill-fated prince was compelled to retreat, and so lost the throne of Persia.

Upon reaching the province of Kerman he set about collecting a new force, but his Kajar pursuers were too numerous to be faced, and he fled to Tabas, where Mir Hasan Khan [1] espoused his cause. With a small body of two hundred men he crossed the Lut to Yezd, whose Governor he defeated, and then marched to Abarguh on the northern borders of Fars. Being joined there by his

[1] Malcolm terms him Husayn, but I have the authority of the present chief for writing Hasan.



From a photograph by H. R. Sykes.

KERMAN: THE MASJID GATE.

(Aga Mohamed Khan entered Kerman by this gate.)

adherents, he laid siege to Darabjird, but a Kajar army forced him to retreat on Tabas, whose chief advised him to seek the support of Timur Shah, the Durrani Amir. He followed this advice, and was actually travelling towards Kandahar when news reached him of the death of the Afghan Amir.

The Final Act of the Drama, A.H. 1208 (1794).—While hesitating what course to pursue, the Zand refugee received letters from two chiefs of Narmáshir offering him their support. He hastened to accept this opportune proposal and determined to surprise Kerman with the men he was able to collect. Moving by forced marches, he detached his uncle Abdulla Khan to make a feint on one side of the city, and when the defenders' attention was fully occupied he escaladed the fort before the alarm could be given. The garrison fought stoutly, but was overcome, and Kerman fell to Lutf Ali Khan through this brilliant feat of arms.

Aga Mohamed realized the seriousness of the situation, and with all the troops he could muster advanced to fight what proved to be the last campaign against his rival. Some four miles to the west of Kerman lies the entrenched camp which formed the headquarters of the besiegers. For four months the heroic Lutf Ali held out in the city, until famine had cut off more than half its inhabitants. At length the Kajar troops were admitted by treachery, but were beaten back. But they were admitted again, and on this occasion in overwhelming force. Seeing that all was lost and that the city gates were guarded, Lutf Ali, after keeping up the fight until dark, crossed the ditch on planks by night with only three followers, and breaking through the cordon escaped to Bam, one hundred and twenty miles to the east.

A brother of the chief of Bam had been among the supporters of Lutf Ali in Kerman, and, having no news of this brother, the chief came to the conclusion that he must have fallen into the hands of the Kajars. He decided in consequence to attempt to win the favour of Aga Mohamed by seizing his guest, who, though warned of his danger, refused to believe in the possibility of such

unspeakable treachery. In the end he mounted his horse to escape, but the beast was hamstrung, and the last Persian hero fell wounded into the hands of his deadly foe. No mercy was shown by the victor. The gallant Lutf Ali was blinded—according to one account, by the very hands of the brutal Aga Mohamed—besides suffering other indignities. He was then sent to Teheran, where he was strangled.

The Fate of Kerman.—Kerman was treated with almost inconceivable cruelty. Not only were its women handed over to the soldiery, who were encouraged to rape and to murder, but the Kajar victor ordered that twenty thousand pairs of eyes should be presented to him. These he carefully counted, and then he remarked to the officer charged with the atrocious task, "Had one pair been wanting, yours would have been taken!" Thus almost the entire male population was blinded, and their women were handed over to the soldiery as slaves. In order to commemorate the capture of Lutf Ali Khan in a suitable manner, Aga Mohamed ordered six hundred prisoners to be decapitated. Their skulls were then carried to Bam by three hundred other prisoners, who were then also killed, and a pyramid of skulls was erected on the spot where Lutf Ali Khan was taken. This pyramid was seen by Pottinger in 1810. Kerman has never recovered. To-day it possesses more beggars and suffers from greater poverty than perhaps any other city in Persia.

The Downfall of the Zand Dynasty.—The awful massacre and the extirpation of the family ended the short-lived Zand dynasty. Lutf Ali possessed remarkable beauty of physique, a valour which has seldom, if ever, been exceeded, and leadership in the field of a very high order. Unfortunately his severity and his imperious and overbearing character, which would not allow him to stoop to conciliation, cost him the support of the great families. Fighting gallantly against hopeless odds, he long maintained the struggle, but in the end he lost the throne of Persia to the rival Kajar chief.[1]

[1] In the introduction to *The Dynasty of the Kajars*, Sir H. Jones Brydges gives an interesting account of the interviews he had with Lutf Ali Khan, who impressed him most favourably.




385

AGA MOHAMED SHAH.

CHAPTER LXXIV

THE FOUNDING OF THE KAJAR DYNASTY

Aga Mohamed était dans l'usage, à l'égard de ses serviteurs qui avaient le malheur de lui déplaire, de leur faire ouvrir le ventre, et arracher les entrailles. Nous pourrions citer sa vie entière, pour montrer à quel point cet homme fut atroce.—*Voyage en Perse*, by G. A. OLIVIER, v. 136.

Aga Mohamed Khan, Kajar.—The memory of few Persians is so universally execrated as that of Aga Mohamed Khan, the founder of the Kajar dynasty. The eldest of the nine sons of Mohamed Husayn Khan, he was captured and castrated by Adil Shah when a boy of five, and this misfortune would sufficiently account for the vindictiveness and cruelty which have branded the Eunuch-Monarch for all time.[1]

Karim Khan, who was eminently conciliatory, had married Aga Mohamed's sister, and treated his brother-in-law, who lived at his court as a hostage, with special kindness. Moreover, realizing his shrewdness and capacity, he frequently asked his advice and paid him the signal compliment of naming him Piran-wisa, after the celebrated Vizier of Afrasiab, the legendary King of Turan. This kindness the vindictive Kajar repaid by cutting the carpets he sat on in the audience-room.

Hearing from his sister that Karim Khan was at the point of death, Aga Mohamed quitted Shiraz on the pretext of a hawking excursion, and on his return learned at the city gate that the Regent was dead. He immedi-

[1] The character of Aga Mohamed is well pourtrayed in the historical novel *Zohrab the Hostage*, by James Morier. G. A. Olivier in vol. v. of his *Voyage en Perse* also gives an excellent contemporary account.

ately loosed a hawk and under the pretence of looking for it disappeared from sight and rode off north. He reached Isfahan, a distance of three hundred and sixteen miles, in three days, and almost without halting continued his journey to Mazanderan, seizing a revenue caravan on the way. Upon his arrival in his native province many members of his tribe rallied round him. He was, however, opposed by his half-brother, Murtaza Kuli,[1] who proclaimed himself king, and it was not until after many vicissitudes of fortune, during the course of which he was once taken prisoner, that he was in a position to make himself master of the Caspian provinces.

The Expulsion of a Russian Expedition by Aga Mohamed, A.D. 1781.—During this period of his chequered career Aga Mohamed came into contact with a Russian expedition, consisting of four frigates and two sloops, which in 1781 anchored off Ashraff and extorted permission to construct a trading factory. When the fortress—for such it proved to be—was nearly completed, the Khan invited the Russian officers to an entertainment, where they were seized. They were then offered the alternative of either destroying their fort or being hanged. Their choice was soon made ; the fort was demolished, and the Muscovites were driven with contumely back to their ships.

The Independent Provinces of Persia.—The series of campaigns culminating in the awful tragedy in the Kerman province described in the previous chapter left Aga Mohamed the victor but hardly the undisputed master of Persia. Before we come to the steps he took to consolidate his power at home and abroad, it is necessary to give a brief account both of the independent provinces of Persia and also of her neighbours.

Khorasan was nominally ruled by the unfortunate Shah Rukh, but in reality was broken up among a number of independent chiefs. At Meshed the two sons of the monarch, Nasrulla *Mirza* and Nadir *Mirza*, fought for power, and their feuds resulted in the plunder of the shrine of the Imam Riza, each prince in turn robbing it of

[1] His only full brother, Husayn Kuli Khan, the father of Fath Ali Shah, had been killed by the Turkoman at the instigation of the Kajar Khan of the rival branch, after his flight from Damghan recorded in the previous chapter.

some of its treasures. Nasrulla *Mirza*, being worsted, sought aid from Karim Khan, but this was refused, and soon afterwards he died.

Meshed was next seized by Mamish Khan of Chinaran, a petty Kurdish chief, who held it for five years until the authority of Shah Rukh was restored by Timur Shah, the Durrani monarch, who retained the suzerainty established by his father. Of the independent rulers, Ishak Khan Karai was the most celebrated. A man of low birth, he occupied Turbat-i-Haydari, some eighty miles to the south of Meshed, and built a caravanserai with money supplied by the chief of his tribe. Before the completion of this building, which was strongly fortified, intrigues had resulted in the death of his master, whose sons fled the country, and Ishak Khan gradually carved out a province for himself and became a power in the land.

In the south of the province, Mir Hasan Khan of Tabas, a descendant of the Beni Shayban who had aided Lutf Ali, held a district bordering on the Lut and played a leading part in Khorasan. Of the other districts, Nishapur was independent under a Bayat chief; Kain was under an Arab ruler descended from the Khuzayma; Turshiz was ruled by another Arab family of the Mishmast tribe. Zafaranlu Kurds governed in Kuchan and Shadillu Kurds in Bujnurd; Sabzawar was held by a chief of the Ghilichi, a Turkish tribe, and finally Sistan was ruled by a petty chief who claimed Keianian descent.[1]

We now turn westward to Kurdistan. The descendants of the ancient Karduchi maintained almost complete independence on the Persian side of the frontier, and on the Turkish side only the sections occupying accessible lands obeyed the Pasha of Baghdad. Of the Kurdish chiefs on the Persian side of the frontier, the most powerful was Khusru Khan, Vali of Ardelan. From Sinna, his capital, he ruled a large district, and at this city his son entertained Malcolm in princely fashion in 1810. The Vali of Ardelan had supported the claims of Karim Khan, but afterwards, having espoused the cause of Ismail

[1] It has been my task to trace the fortunes of these tribes, almost all of which are to be found in or near the districts they ruled a century ago.

Khan and defeated Jafar Khan, he sent the spoils to Aga Mohamed Khan and thenceforward became his staunch supporter. Baluchistan at this period was ruled by Nasir I., the Great, who reigned from 1750 to 1793, and whose sway was acknowledged as far west as Bampur. He was entirely independent. The rest of Persia had been the cock-pit for the various pretenders to the throne, who had fought for power as far north as the Caspian Sea and as far south as the Persian Gulf.

The Neighbouring States.—Among the foreign countries Afghanistan was peaceful under Timur Shah ; and his son Zaman Shah at the opening of his reign was too much occupied with internal troubles to be an aggressive neighbour. Bokhara was ruled by Begi Jan,[1] a Dervish of the royal house, who extended the sway of the Uzbegs over the whole of the region lying between the Amu Darya and the Sir Darya. The reduction of Merv opened the way for an invasion of Khorasan. In A.H. 1209 (1794) Begi Jan led his horsemen to the gates of Meshed, but, finding it beyond his power to reduce the capital of Khorasan, he informed his army that the Imam Riza had appeared to him in a dream and commanded him to spare the sacred city. It is curious that the Uzbegs were content to raid and never attempted to conquer Khorasan.

Turkey, which for many centuries had been Iran's most formidable and aggressive neighbour, was at this period too much occupied with European politics to take any active interest in Persian affairs. The Ottoman power was represented by Sulayman Aga, the Pasha of Baghdad, who had defended Basra against the forces of Karim Khan. His policy, much to the advantage of Aga Mohamed, was invariably friendly towards Persia.

The Invasion of Georgia, A.H. 1209 (1795).—We come next to the state of Georgia. Upon the death of Nadir Shah, Heraclius, who had served him faithfully, had not only freed himself but, as already mentioned, had annexed Persian territory up to the Araxes. He was, however, shrewd enough to realize that as soon as Persia was reunited

[1] Malcolm, ii. p. 243, gives an interesting account of this remarkably clever man.



From a photograph by Major J. W. Watson.

TURBAT-I-HAYDARI.

Georgia would be invaded. By way of insurance against such an event Heraclius in 1783 signed a treaty with Russia, in which he renounced all connexion with Persia and entered into an offensive and defensive alliance with the Northern Power. The Empress Catherine, in turn, bound herself and her successors to protect the integrity of Georgia.

In 1795 Aga Mohamed, after summoning Heraclius to do homage, advanced from Ardebil with an army sixty thousand strong, marching in three divisions. The first moved by the plain of Moghan to levy arrears of tribute; the second marched on Erivan, which was garrisoned by fifteen thousand Georgians; and the third under the Shah himself undertook the reduction of Shisha, a hill-fort situated on the left bank of the Aras. Aga Mohamed, after failing in his attack on Shisha, left a force to blockade it and joined the second division before Erivan. That famous fortress also was too strong to be taken by an enemy unprovided with a battering train, and consequently the Shah was again obliged to leave a portion of his army to blockade the garrison. He then marched to Ganja, where he effected a junction with the column which had passed through Moghan unopposed. Heraclius, instead of relying on his fortresses and awaiting aid from Russia, rashly met the invaders though they outnumbered him in the proportion of four to one, and the Georgians after a heroic struggle were overpowered and defeated. Tiflis was taken by the Persians without resistance. The old and infirm and all the priests were massacred, and the able-bodied of both sexes, to the number of twenty thousand, were carried off into slavery. Erivan surrendered to the Shah after the fall of Tiflis, but Shisha continued to resist.

The Coronation of Aga Mohamed Khan, A.H. 1210 (1796).—Aga Mohamed had not been formally crowned, but on returning from his successful expedition into Georgia he consented to the ceremonial after repeated entreaties. He judiciously refused to wear the four-plumed crown of Nadir Shah, and contented himself with a small circular diadem known as *Kulla Keiani*, or the

"Keianian Headpiece." He also girded on the sacred sword of the Safavis at Ardebil.

The Reduction of Khorasan, A.H. 1210 (1796).—Strengthened in prestige by his coronation, the Shah determined to subdue Khorasan. He marched by way of Astrabad, which he beautified with buildings that still remain, and after punishing the Turkoman directed his march on Meshed. No resistance was even contemplated, the petty chiefs mentioned above proffered their allegiance one by one, and Nadir *Mirza* fled to Afghanistan, leaving his blind parent to the tender mercies of his hereditary enemy.

The main objects of Aga Mohamed were to seize Khorasan and to strengthen it against the Uzbegs. In addition, he coveted the splendid jewels which he knew that Shah Rukh possessed and had concealed from every one. The wretched man, now over sixty years of age, swore solemnly that he had nothing of the kind, but his oaths were disregarded and torture was applied by the pitiless Kajar. Day by day, under the influence of the agony inflicted, he revealed the secret hiding-places of his hoarded wealth. The celebrated ruby of Aurangzeb was produced only when a circle of paste had been put upon his head and molten lead poured on to it. Aga Mohamed, with whom love of jewelry was almost a mania, was overjoyed at securing this priceless stone. He gave orders for the tortures to cease; but they had been too much for the descendant of Nadir Shah, who died soon afterwards from their effects.

The Russian Invasion, A.H. 1210 (1796).—In connexion with the struggle for power between Aga Mohamed and his half-brothers, reference has already been made to Murtaza Kuli Khan, who after his defeat fled to Russia. There he was well treated, and it was apparently intended to utilize him for the furtherance of Russian ambitions. Catherine was undoubtedly chagrined by her failure to succour Georgia in accordance with the treaty, and determined to avenge the Persian invasion. In 1796 a Russian army forty thousand strong compelled the surrender of Derbent, Baku and other fortified places, and



From a photograph by Major J. W. Watson.

THE HALL OF AUDIENCE, ASTRABAD.

the Russian general encamped for the winter on the plain of Moghan, with the entire country to the north in his possession. Aga Mohamed was preparing to take the field in the spring, when the Empress Catherine died, the army was withdrawn, and the Russian peril disappeared.

The Shah, delighted at this extraordinary piece of good fortune, resolved to invade Georgia again. He was within sixty miles of the Araxes when the inhabitants of Shisha, who had expelled their governor, begged him to take possession of the fortress. After a forced march he found the Aras in flood; but his men crossed it, partly in boats and partly by swimming, and Shisha at last fell into his hands.

The Assassination of Aga Mohamed Shah, A.H. 1211 (1797).—Three days after the capture of this stronghold, the Shah was disturbed by the noise of a quarrel between two of his personal servants, and ordered that both should be at once put to death. Sadik Khan Shakaki interceded for them, and on the ground that it was the night of Friday[1] and sacred to prayer, the execution of the sentence was deferred until the following morning. With folly so extreme that it almost suggests mental derangement, Aga Mohamed allowed the condemned men meanwhile to perform their duties about his person. At night, with the aid of a third accomplice, they assassinated their master. Like his victim, Shah Rukh, he died in the sixty-third year of his age.

His Character.—Thanks to Malcolm we have a life-like portrait of the Eunuch-Shah. At a distance his slight form resembled that of a youth, but a close inspection revealed a beardless and shrivelled face horrible to contemplate. Yet he was a remarkable man, and his keen insight into character, his sagacity, patience, and courage secured to him the throne of Persia in spite of his physical disabilities. Malcolm states that his three ruling passions were power, avarice, and revenge, but that he was able to subordinate everything to his passion for power. This was in the first instance personal, but it also aimed at making the Kajars the royal tribe. Seeing

[1] The night of Friday begins at sunset on Thursday.

clearly that his ambition could not be realized unless he was supported by a united tribe, he forgave the Kajar chiefs who had killed his father and had insulted himself, and bound them to him by repeated acts of kindness. He showed his judgment and insight by the unreserved trust he reposed in *Haji* Ibrahim; although, according to common belief, he warned his heir that he was too powerful a subject to be allowed to live. He treated his soldiers with justice, and, if policy demanded it, he could display moderation, the rarest of qualities in a despot.

As we have seen in his dealings with Shah Rukh, avarice was a besetting vice. One of his methods of making money was to sell an intended victim to an enemy, with full powers to wring out the last coin in the wretched man's possession. In the pursuit of money he displayed a childishness which is not unfrequently associated with absolute power. He once overheard a peasant whose ears he had ordered to be cut off promising the executioner a few pieces of silver if only the tips were cut. The offender was astonished when the Shah informed him that, by doubling the offer in favour of his sovereign, he could save his ears entirely!

Aga Mohamed's cruelty has been sufficiently exemplified. Of his treachery it will be enough to give a single instance. His brother, Jafar Kuli Khan, who had served him with conspicuous valour, asked for the governorship of Isfahan as a reward. This was refused, and, as he subsequently evaded a request to appear at Court, Aga Mohamed became seriously alarmed. Fearing to employ force, he induced Jafar Kuli's mother to persuade her son that the Shah was ready to appoint him to Isfahan, on the sole condition that he should pass through Teheran and declare his forgiveness for the treatment he had received. These representations were supported by solemn assurances of safety. The Prince, too confiding, believed them, and was assassinated by order of his brother. The latter, in order to keep the letter of his oath on the Koran that Jafar Kuli should spend only one night at Teheran, had the corpse immediately removed. This dastardly act recalls the dark deeds attributed to Louis XI. of



AGA MAHOMED KHAN.

(From an original Persian painting.)

(From Sir John Malcolm's *History of Persia*, 1815, vol. ii.)

France, whom Aga Mohamed closely resembled, alike in his tortuous policy, his aversion to display, and his strange devotional fervour. As a ruler he was not faced with the difficulties of Nadir Shah, being singularly fortunate in the unaggressive character of his two important neighbours, Turkey and Afghanistan. Although not a great soldier, he overcame all rivals, mainly through his judgment and practical capacity, and thereby succeeded in once more uniting Iran. *Oderint dum metuant* might have been his motto, but he lived in a cruel age when might was right. It must be placed on record to his credit that after his authority had been established the roads became safe and trade prospered, whereas under Nadir the country had been depopulated.

The Accession of Fath Ali Shah.—The body of Aga Mohamed was left unburied in the wild confusion that followed his death. The army for the most part broke up and dispersed, but the influence of *Haji* Ibrahim kept together a sufficient force to march to Teheran in support of Fath Ali, the nephew and heir of the deceased Shah. The capital was held in his behalf by a Kajar chief, and upon his arrival from Fars, of which he was governor, he was admitted and instantly proclaimed Shah.

Various Pretenders.—Sadik Khan Shakaki, who after the assassination of Aga Mohamed had secured possession of the crown jewels, collected fifteen thousand Kurds and made a bid for the throne. He marched on Kazvin, and was defeated in its vicinity by Fath Ali Shah, whose force was only half that of his rival. Sadik Khan fled and purchased his pardon, not once but twice, by means of the crown jewels. Another claimant was Mohamed Khan, son of Zaki Khan Zand, who gained possession of Isfahan, but was soon driven out to the Bakhtiari Mountains. Aided there by some Kurds, he attempted to surprise a Persian army under Mohamed Vali Khan, but was defeated, captured, and blinded. A third pretender was Husayn Kuli Khan, brother of the Shah. This prince had done good service against Sadik Khan and had been rewarded by the Governorship of Fars. There he wasted his time in pleasure and dissipation until, resenting the appoint-

ment from Teheran of a general to command the Fars army, he rebelled. He was joined by Mohamed Vali Khan, and the Shah was at the same time further weakened by the revolt of Sulayman Khan Kajar, the Governor of Azerbaijan, who hoped to gain the throne by attacking whichever of the two brothers emerged as victor from the impending struggle. But the brothers came to terms, owing to the intervention of their mother, and Sulayman Khan, seeing his hopes disappear, took sanctuary in the royal stable at Teheran. With remarkable generosity the Shah not only pardoned him, but reappointed him Governor of Azerbaijan.

The last important pretender was Nadir *Mirza*, who on hearing of the death of Aga Mohamed had returned to Khorasan from Afghanistan and taken possession of Meshed. The Shah marched into Khorasan to assert his authority. Nishapur shut its gates and was stormed, and Turbat-i-Haydari also was taken. Upon the arrival of the Persian army before Meshed, Nadir *Mirza* submitted and was pardoned.




FATH ALI SHAH.

CHAPTER LXXV

BRITISH AND FRENCH MISSIONS AT THE COURT OF FATH ALI SHAH

Buonaparte saisit adroitement l'occasion de la paix de Tilsit pour engager Alexandre d'envoyer une armée le printemps prochain en Perse, qui s'unirait avec une armée française qui devait passer par Constantinople et l'Asie Mineure, et de là traversant la Perse, organiser les troupes que la Cour d'Isfahan devait donner pour sa part, et commencer quelque acte hostile contre les possessions de la Compagnie des Indes.—*From an Official Document of the period.*

The Afghan Question.—It is interesting to trace the beginning of the permanent British connexion[1] with Persia rather more than a century ago, but it is difficult to-day to realize that the cause of the despatch of the first mission to the Court at Teheran was the hope that Persian military action would restrain Zaman Shah, Amir of Kabul, who after establishing his position at home was aspiring to continue the aggressive rôle originated by Ahmad Shah. In 1798 Lord Wellesley, the Governor-General of Bengal, received a letter from the Afghan prince giving notice of his proposed expedition into India, and requesting that the English army should co-operate in driving back the Marathas from the north into the Deccan. The Governor-General at this period was at war with Tippu Sultan, who with French assistance was making great efforts to drive the British out of India; and in

[1] Malcolm's history ends at this point. Among the many works consulted by me are *England and Russia in the East*, by Sir H. Rawlinson; *History of Persia*, by R. G. Watson; *The War in Afghanistan*, and *Life of Sir John Malcolm*, by J. W. Kaye, and *Mission to the Court of Persia*, by Sir Harford Jones Brydges.

pursuance of this object he had urged Zaman Shah to invade the Panjab. Tippu was fortunately killed at the fall of Seringapatam, in 1798, but this success did not cause Wellesley to relax his precautions towards the north, more especially as he was aware of negotiations which were being conducted with the Afghan Amir, by Vizier Ali of Oude and other powerful Indians, including Hindu Rajahs. To combat these dangerous intrigues the Governor-General instructed Mehdi Ali Khan, a naturalized Persian who was acting as the Company's Resident at Bushire, "to take measures for inducing the Court of Persia to keep Shah Zaman in perpetual check (so as to preclude him from returning to India), but without any decided act of hostility." The success of this policy of inducing Persia to intervene in Afghanistan was already assured. Zaman Shah about this period had instructed his Vizier to send an envoy to *Haji* Ibrahim with a demand that his master should surrender Khorasan to Afghanistan. This demand naturally irritated the young Shah, who dictated a reply to the effect that it was his intention to restore the eastern boundaries of Persia to the condition which had existed under the Safavi dynasty. In other words, the independence of Afghanistan was to be swept away, Herat, Kandahar, and Kabul being all included in the Safavi Empire. Fath Ali Shah held good cards, for two of Zaman Shah's brothers, Mahmud and Firuz, had taken refuge with the "Asylum of the Universe." In 1798 these princes were sent with a Persian force to Afghanistan; but little was effected. In the following year Fath Ali Shah took the field in person. He led an army into Khorasan to punish the governors and chiefs who had rebelled. There he received an embassy from Zaman Shah requesting him to return to Teheran; and to this he tamely agreed, on condition that the Amir's fugitive brothers should be well received in Afghanistan. The actual result of the Persian military operations was slight, but the consequent retirement of Zaman Shah from Lahore to Peshawar, in order that he might be ready to fight if necessary, relieved the Afghan pressure on India.

The Mission of Mehdi Ali Khan, 1799.—Mehdi Ali Khan, a skilful diplomatist of the Persian school, had written letters from Bushire to the Court at Teheran in which he excited the indignation of the Shah by an account of atrocities committed by the Sunni Afghans on the Shias of Lahore, thousands of whom, he declared, had fled for refuge to the territories ruled by the East India Company, and at the same time urged that if Zaman Shah were checked a service would be rendered to God and man. He stated, furthermore, that the Governor-General did not at all apprehend an Afghan invasion of Hindustan, because the fame of the English artillery was well known. As an example of what English troops could do, he asserted that seven hundred of these brave soldiers had defeated the army of Suraj-u-Dola numbering three hundred thousand men!

In the autumn of 1799 Mehdi Ali Khan was received in person by the Shah. Spending large sums in presents, he succeeded in persuading the Persian monarch to continue hostilities against Afghanistan; and he then returned to Bushire, where he met Captain Malcolm, who had recently landed on his first memorable mission.

The French Peril to India.—It was owing to the fantastic strain in Napoleon Buonaparte's character that Persia was brought within the orbit of European politics. Among his far-reaching plans was one for using the Shah as an instrument in his scheme of world politics, more especially in connexion with the invasion of India; and at this time the minds of the British rulers in that country were obsessed with fears of such an attack. To us, who have studied large scale maps and are familiar with the barrenness both of Persia and of Afghanistan, the scheme has an impracticable appearance. But in 1800 it was seriously contemplated by the Emperor Paul of Russia and by Napoleon, to both of whom the difficulties to be encountered were unknown. Examining the project on a small scale map, they saw that the shortest line to India ran *via* Baku across the Caspian Sea to Astrabad Bay. From this point the line would pass through Astrabad, Meshed, and Herat, and doubtless both the Persians

and the Afghans would have been invited to join in the looting of India. Had the scheme ever taken practical shape it must have ended in disaster, owing not only to lack of supplies and sickness, but to attacks by local tribes and to the length[1] of the line of communications from France and from the Volga to India.

It may be thought that our statesmen in India should have realized these facts. It must, however, be remembered that preparations were actually made by Russia and that the scheme was upset only by the assassination of the Tsar. Moreover, the genius of Napoleon was so dazzling that no project seemed beyond his power of achievement, and consequently the sense of proportion was apt to be lost. Finally, the position of the British in India was none too strong, and the appearance of a Franco-Russian army in Persia would undoubtedly have reacted most unfavourably on the general situation.

Malcolm's First Mission, 1800.—The mission of Captain Malcolm was decided upon before the news of the success of Mehdi Ali Khan had reached Calcutta. His instructions were to induce the Shah of Persia to bring pressure on Zaman Shah; to counteract any possible designs of the French; and to restore the prosperity of British and British Indian trade with Persia.

The young Scotch officer, who held only a junior rank and might well have been looked down upon by Persians of high rank, was completely successful in his difficult task. He carefully studied the Persians, who were impressed by his strong personality; he won favour by a generous and even lavish distribution of gifts; and on arriving at Teheran he confirmed by his remarkable capacity the good report which had preceded him.

Under these favourable conditions a political and commercial treaty was speedily negotiated between Malcolm and *Haji* Ibrahim, the Vizier. The Shah agreed to make no peace with the Amir of Afghanistan unless the latter renounced his designs on the British possessions in India.

[1] From Astrabad to Herat is about six hundred and fifty miles, and from Herat to Kabul is another five hundred.



FATH ALI SHAH.

(From a Persian picture.)

(By kind permission of the Secretary of State for India.)

The British envoy, on his part, agreed to furnish munitions of war to the Shah in case he was attacked by the Afghans or the French. There were stringent provisions for the expulsion and "extirpation" of any French subjects who wished to settle in Persia. On the commercial side it was stipulated that English and Indian merchants should be permitted to settle free of taxes at the ports, and that English broad-cloth, iron, steel, and lead should be admitted free of duty. Thus Malcolm's first mission ended in complete success. Rawlinson, it is true, regards it as a failure inasmuch as it revealed to Persia our anxiety about "the road" to India. Although I realize the force of his objections, I am inclined to think that the Persians, who are remarkable for their political acumen, have not, since the reign of Nadir Shah at all events, required any tuition on the subject, and that to have delayed on that account the opening up of relations with Persia, or to have ignored this important question, would have been a mistake. At the same time, the clauses directed against the French are certainly characterized by extreme bitterness which invites hostile criticism.

The Persian Embassy to India, 1802.—Fath Ali Shah sent a return embassy to Bombay, headed by a certain *Haji* Khalil Khan. Most unfortunately, the envoy was killed in a quarrel which arose between his servants and the guard that attended him. The English authorities, who were much upset at the untoward occurrence, made the most handsome amends,[1] and the Shah is said to have observed that more ambassadors might be killed on the same terms.

Three years later Aga Nabi Khan, brother-in-law of the late envoy, reached India as the representative of Persia; but the "sultanized" Governor-General had left India, profound indifference concerning Persia prevailed at Calcutta, more especially after the disastrous ending to the French campaigns in Syria and Egypt, and Aga Nabi Khan returned home in January 1807 a disappointed man. This policy of inertness, which took no notice of the

[1] Ismail Khan, son of the envoy, was granted a pension of two thousand rupees a month for life. He lived to enjoy this annuity for sixty-five years, and died in Paris, where he attended every performance of the opera during a period of fifty years.

new situation created by the Russian and French advances, was deplorable and was destined to bear bitter fruit.

The Downfall of Haji Ibrahim.—Fath Ali Shah, who owed his throne to *Haji* Ibrahim, became seriously alarmed at his power, which, he feared, might result in his dethronement. Probably, too, he was influenced by his uncle's advice. Whatever the exact causes, it was decided to put an end to the King-Maker. By a preconcerted plan all the members of his family were seized at their various seats of government and put to death, *Haji* Ibrahim himself being thrown into a cauldron of oil. The only son that was spared was a sickly boy, who notwithstanding his indifferent health lived to be the ancestor of the Kawam-ul-Mulk family. *Haji* Ibrahim was a great personality and a typical Persian of the period. One of many stories told about him is that when Malcolm brought the potato, then unknown in Persia, as a gift, explaining that it would be of great value as an article of food to the people, the Vizier observed that he did not see how it could be a suitable gift for *him*, and that he would much prefer some rolls of English cloth.

The Second Rebellion of Husayn Kuli Khan.—The Shah's brother, who was Governor of Kashan, once more made a bid for the throne. He obtained possession of Isfahan by means of a forged order, and then proceeded to raise an army in the Bakhtiari country. Fath Ali Shah acted with considerable promptitude. He rode to Isfahan (a distance of 280 miles) in four days, and, leaving a force to besiege it, set out in pursuit of his brother. Hearing that the rebel was making for the Turkish frontier, he detached a force to intercept him, and the Pretender in despair took sanctuary at Kum.

The Execution of Nadir Mirza, A.H. 1216 (1802).—The folly of Nadir *Mirza* brought about the final downfall of his family. After his pardon, recorded in the previous chapter, the Shah, with extraordinary leniency, permitted him to retain the governorship of Khorasan, but its chiefs complained so bitterly of his tyranny that Fath Ali felt bound to intervene. When the city was besieged, Nadir *Mirza* looted the shrine to pay his troops, and with his

battle-axe, the family weapon, murdered a leading *Sayyia* who protested against the act of sacrilege. This atrocity was his last. The whole city rose against him; he was captured and sent to Teheran, and there by a cruel death expiated his crimes.

The Expulsion of the Afghans from Narmashir and Sistan.—The district of Bam, which was the scene of the downfall of Lutf Ali Khan, was governed by a chief of the Ghilzai tribe, who also ruled Sistan and the date-growing district of Khabis. Under Fath Ali Shah this semi-independent ruler rebelled but was ejected without much difficulty, and the districts of Bam, Narmashir, and Khabis were restored to the province of Kerman. The Afghan occupation has not been forgotten, and I have been shown a tower which they built in Narmashir.

French Overtures to Persia, 1802–1804.—The schemes discussed by the First Consul and the Tsar were soon translated into French action. In 1802 overtures were made by France, apparently through her active Consular Agents, who, according to Rawlinson, "remained in Syria after the French evacuation of the country, and continued for many years to pursue a restless course of political adventure, spreading in the sequel a perfect net-work of intrigue over the whole face of Western Asia." These pioneer attempts were coldly received in Persia, but in 1804 the French Government made proposals for an alliance against Russia. Fath Ali Shah had already applied for help to England through the Resident at Baghdad, and was also despatching a mission to India, and consequently no definite reply was sent to the French communication.

The First French Mission, 1805.—In 1805 war broke out between France and Russia, and a French envoy, Colonel Romieu, appeared at Teheran with more precise proposals. Knowing that the loss of Georgia had affected Persia deeply, Napoleon offered, if the British alliance were repudiated by the Shah and India were invaded by a combined French and Persian army, to throw an auxiliary force into the lost province and to subsidize the Persian army. Fath Ali Shah was most unwilling to come to such

an arrangement with a regicide nation, and at the first audience he merely asked the French representative "How are you?" "How is Buonaparte?" and "What made you kill your king?" Meanwhile the lack of rapid communications between Calcutta and London and the procrastination of the British Government had caused a long delay. The British Cabinet had debated on the question of giving assistance to Persia for two years without coming to any decision, and the Governor-General had referred the matter to London.

The Treaty of Finkenstein, 1807.—Disappointed in the quarter whence he had hoped for support, and with no British Minister at Teheran to maintain British influence, the Shah, realizing the seriousness of the Russian menace, responded to the overtures of the French Emperor, and followed up his letter by the despatch of *Mirza* Riza as an envoy to the French Court, which he reached at Tilsit. In his instructions it was laid down that, although the Shah regarded Russia as an ordinary enemy, yet she was "equally an enemy of the kings of Persia and of France, and her destruction accordingly became the duty of the two kings. France would attack her from that quarter; Persia from this." A further instruction shows how completely the Shah had turned his back on the procrastinating British, for it was declared that "If the French have an intention of invading Khorasan, the king will appoint an army to go down by the road of Kabul and Kandahar." In other words, the Shah asserted his readiness to invade India. At the same time *Mirza* Riza was forbidden to cede a port for the use of the French "for their passage to Hindustan." A preliminary treaty, known as the treaty of Finkenstein, which embodied the conditions just mentioned, was signed in May 1807 and sent to Teheran.

The Gardanne Mission, 1807–1808.—A few months later an important military mission, composed of General Gardanne and seventy commissioned and non-commissioned officers, appeared in Persia and set to work to train the Persian army on European lines. The French general was undoubtedly instructed to organize the army of the Shah with a view to its employment as an auxiliary

to a French army in an invasion of India. The heading to this chapter demonstrates the far-reaching scope of Napoleon's scheme, and corroboration was received from Constantinople that the Porte had been approached with a view to the passage of a French army across the Ottoman dominions. Meanwhile the convention of Tilsit had been signed almost at the same time, and it is generally believed that the partition of the East was discussed by Napoleon and the Tsar Alexander at their historical meeting; the fact that the French Emperor intended to appoint his brother Lucien to represent him at Teheran proves that he, at any rate, seriously intended to contest British supremacy in India.

Fath Ali was deeply chagrined by the convention of Tilsit. The restoration of Georgia, for which he had hoped, was not even mentioned in it, and since France had by its terms made peace with Russia friendly offices had to take the place of a French army. Nevertheless Napoleon, whose optimism was remarkable, undoubtedly hoped to conclude an offensive and defensive alliance with Persia.

The Fight for Power in Afghanistan, 1799–1808.—We must now turn to Afghanistan in order to record a fight for power which, together with the rise of Ranjit Singh, changed the whole situation and caused the Afghan peril to pass away. Zaman Shah owed his position to the support of *Sirdar* Payanda Khan, who had espoused his cause and seated him on the throne of Kabul. As was almost inevitable in Afghanistan, the Sirdar after a time fell into disfavour, plotted against his master, and was executed. He left behind him twenty-two sons, famous as the "Barakzai brothers," the eldest of whom, Fath Khan, fled to Persia and joined Mahmud, brother of Zaman Shah, whom he persuaded to make a bid for the throne. Farrah was in the first place seized and, thanks to the aid given by the Barakzais, Kandahar subsequently fell. Mahmud then advanced on Kabul, and in 1800 defeated Zaman Shah, whom he blinded. The wretched man escaped in the end to Ludhiana, where he was granted a pension by the Honourable East India Company.

Mahmud Shah now occupied the throne of Kabul, Herat was held by his brother Firuz-u-Din, and Kandahar by his heir-apparent, Kamran *Mirza*.

In 1803, owing to Fath Khan's protection of the Shias of Kabul from massacre, a plot was formed in favour of the Amir's brother, the Shuja-ul-Mulk, who seized the throne and imprisoned, but did not blind, Fath Khan. The latter submitted to the usurper, and for a few years Shah Shuja (as he is generally termed) ruled with the aid of the able Barakzai chief. He sent expeditions to Sind and Kashmir, but met with no success.

Malcolm's Second Mission, 1808.—The Home and Indian Governments were both alarmed by the rapidity with which French influence had become paramount at Teheran and the consequent increase in the French peril.[1] Sir Harford Jones, who afterwards assumed the name of Brydges and who had served as Resident at Basra, was appointed Envoy Extraordinary from the Crown, and in 1807 was despatched from England to Persia by way of the Cape with a commission which, although placing him in subordination to Lord Minto, the Governor-General, gave him full powers to negotiate a treaty between the King and the Shah. His expenses were chargeable to the Government of India. Meanwhile Lord Minto, who was at first ignorant of this appointment, realizing the urgency of the case, appointed Malcolm, now a Brigadier-General, to undertake much the same task. The latter, escorted by a powerful squadron, reached the Persian Gulf in May, 1808, at a time when the influence of General Gardanne was entirely in the ascendant. He was drilling the Persian army and constructing fortifications, and it was hoped that, through French influence, Georgia would be restored to Persia. In these circumstances the British Envoy, whose tone was perhaps too peremptory, was not treated with the courtesy due to his position. He was instructed by the Ministers of Fath Ali Shah to make his

[1] The further steps that were taken included the despatch, in this year, of Mountstuart Elphinstone to Peshawar, where he concluded a treaty with Shah Shuja, by the terms of which Great Britain was bound to aid the Afghan ruler with money in case of a joint invasion of his territory by Persia and France. Shah Shuja, on his side, agreed to resist the confederates and to exclude all Frenchmen from his dominions for ever. Metcalfe was despatched on a similar mission to Ranjit Singh.

representations to the Governor-General of Fars, and was debarred from approaching Teheran.

Malcolm, justly incensed at the affront offered in his person to the Honourable East India Company, returned to India and urged that the island of Kharak should be occupied by Indian troops. This proposal was, after some consideration, accepted by Lord Minto; but just when the troops were about to sail it became clear from the situation in Europe that France could not possibly spare an army for Persia, and the expedition was therefore countermanded.

The Mission of Sir Harford Jones, 1808–1809.—British policy has ever been proverbially fortunate, and when, in the autumn of the same year, Sir Harford Jones appeared on the scene after the retirement of Malcolm, and proceeded in the pompous language of the period "to throw the aegis of the British Crown over the imperilled destinies of India," a reaction against the French had set in at Teheran. The Persians realized that General Gardanne had promised more than he could perform; he had, in fact, overplayed his part. Jones pointed out that good offices were not sufficient to bind the hands of Russia, and when he proposed a British alliance, together with an annual subsidy of tomans 160,000 (£120,000) so long as Great Britain continued to be at war with Russia, and the services of British officers to train the Persian army, Fath Ali Shah agreed to give General Gardanne his passports. The British envoy, who had brought as a gift from George III. a fine diamond which excited the Shah's covetousness, was accorded a magnificent reception. Under these favourable conditions there were no delays, and in March, 1809, a preliminary treaty was negotiated, the terms of which were approved by both the Home and the Indian Governments, and formed the basis of the definitive treaty that was finally concluded.

As might be supposed, the action of Sir Harford Jones, who was subordinate to the Governor-General, caused no little friction. Indeed so strained did his relations with India become that Lord Minto ordered the suspension of his functions, and his bills were pro-

tested. It is stated that he had made remarks which tended to lower the dignity of the Governor-General. But inasmuch as he represented the Crown and had to explain to the Persians, when his bills were protested, the relation of the East India Company to the British Government, it would have been difficult for him to avoid giving offence, if offence was looked for.[1] After the lapse of years the good work done by both Malcolm and Jones remains, and the friction which was almost inevitable may be forgotten. The preliminary treaty was taken to England by James Morier, the author of the immortal "Hajji Baba," who was the secretary to the mission. Lord Minto accepted the arrangements which had been contracted with the Shah while condemning the behaviour of the negotiator, but insisted that the execution of the treaty should be entrusted to an officer nominated by himself.

Malcolm's Third Mission, 1810.—Malcolm was accordingly sent on a third mission which was brilliant in the extreme. It was magnificently equipped, and the envoy was accompanied by a large staff of officers, among whom were Monteith and Lindsay. The latter, a giant standing 6 feet 8 inches, was an artillery officer, and such was his influence with the Persians, who compared him to Rustam, that he subsequently became Commander-in-Chief of the Persian army, a post which, under the name of Lindsay Bethune, he filled for many years with much credit. Malcolm was received with extraordinary marks of esteem and friendship, and his fine character, his justice, and his knowledge of the world impressed the Persians so much that all Englishmen in Persia still benefit from the high qualities displayed by their great representative. It was in his honour that the Persian decoration, "the Lion and the Sun," was inaugurated. At the same time, it must not be forgotten that Sir Harford Jones retained the control of diplomatic relations with Persia throughout.

Acting on Malcolm's instructions, Pottinger and Christie made a daring journey of exploration through Baluchistan; and Pottinger's *Travels in Baluchistan*, recording the results

[1] In his *Mission, etc.*, p. 209, Jones explains the whole circumstances of the case.

of this adventure, remains a classic on the subject. This was not the only literary fruit of the British mission; for Kinneir produced his able *Geographical Memoir*, and Malcolm himself wrote a *History of Persia*, as well as his light and entertaining *Sketches of Persia*.

The Embassy of Haji Mirza Abul Hasan Khan, 1809–1810.—In return for these embassies, Fath Ali Shah despatched *Haji Mirza* Abul Hasan Khan to the Court of St. James's. His special object was to ascertain clearly how the subsidy Persia was entitled to receive under the treaty was to be paid. This versatile son of Iran has been immortalized by James Morier (who accompanied him on both his outward and his homeward journey) in "Hajji Baba in England."[1]

The Appointment of Sir Gore Ouseley, 1811.—The treaty negotiated by Sir Harford Jones was duly ratified in England, and its negotiator was confirmed in his appointment at Teheran, the Home Government deciding to retain permanent control of diplomatic relations with Persia. Upon his resignation in 1811, he was succeeded by Sir Gore Ouseley, in whose suite were Major D'Arcy, better known as D'Arcy Todd, and a detachment of English sergeants of the 47th regiment. Sir William Ouseley, whose writings on Persia remain a classic, also accompanied the mission.

The Definitive Treaty, 1814.—Shortly after the conclusion of the treaty of Gulistan, which will be dealt with in the following chapter, Sir Gore Ouseley negotiated with Persia the definitive treaty based on Sir Harford Jones's preliminary agreement. This he took with him to England. A year later Mr. Ellis reached Teheran and, with Mr. Morier, concluded the final definitive treaty, which was signed on November 25, 1814.[2] By the terms of this important document, which was specially declared to be

[1] Charles Lamb wrote of the Persian ambassador that he "is the principal thing talked of now. I sent some people to see him worship the sun at half-past six in the morning, but he did not come. . . . The common people call him Shaw Nonsense." His portrait, painted by Sir William Beechey, hangs in the India Office. The ambassador, on his return home, wrote a book termed *Hairat-nama*, or "Record of Wonders."

[2] *Aitchison's Treaties*, number vii. The preamble runs: "These happy leaves are a nosegay plucked from the thornless garden of concord and tied by the hands of the plenipotentiaries," etc.

defensive, all alliances between Persia and European nations hostile to Great Britain were made null and void, and all European armies were to be prevented from entering Persia, if hostile to Great Britain. The Shah was furthermore bound to induce the rulers of Khwarazm, Tataristan, Bokhara, and Samarcand to oppose any army which might attempt to cross their territories with a view to the invasion of India. Mutual assistance was to be rendered in case of aggression, and the limits between Persia and Russia were to be determined by Great Britain, Persia, and Russia. With extraordinary generosity the subsidy was finally fixed at 200,000 tomans (equivalent to 15 *lacs*, or £150,000) and was not to be stopped unless Persia engaged in an aggressive war. It was to be spent under the superintendence of the British Minister. By another article endeavours were to be made to include Persia in any treaty of peace between Great Britain and a European Power at war with Persia, failing which military and financial support was to be given. As regards Afghanistan the British Government was not to interfere in case of war breaking out between Persia and the Amir, whereas Persia, on her part, agreed to attack Afghanistan if it went to war with Great Britain.

It is easy to criticise various details of this treaty, as, for instance, the clause by which Great Britain was bound to interfere in boundary disputes between Persia and Russia; or, again, the supposition that the Shah could influence the ruler of Tataristan to oppose an invading army betrayed much ignorance of political geography. The document, to be judged fairly, must be taken as a whole. We must bear in mind the keen struggle which the French had made to win over the Court of Persia, and the existence of a French peril, even though it loomed larger in the minds of men than reality justified. We must also not forget that there had been an Afghan peril. Taking everything into consideration, we cannot but admit that the treaty dealt with these important questions in a statesmanlike and satisfactory manner. The only criticism which I would venture to make is that it does not appear to have been recognized that a new power had risen on

the horizon, and that henceforth Russia alone would be likely, or indeed able, to threaten India. It was known that in 1791 there had been a scheme for an invasion of Hindustan by way of Orenburg, Bokhara, and Kabul. Other schemes for Russian conquests in Central Asia had also been published. But it was not realized at first that Russian aggression on Georgia and Karabagh had inaugurated a new and permanent state of affairs. The reports of British officers who at the head of Persian regiments fought Russian troops, the appointment of a permanent mission at Teheran, and the travels and writings of the gifted Englishmen of the period all contributed to furnish that accurate information which is essential as a basis of sound policy.



Fath Ali Shah.

CHAPTER LXXVI

THE DISASTROUS CAMPAIGNS WITH RUSSIA

His Majesty the Shah of Persia, as well in his own name as in that of his heirs and successors, cedes in full right and property to the Empire of Russia, the *Khanate* of Erivan on either side of the Araxes, and the *Khanate* of Nakhchivan.—*The Treaty of Turkomanchai*, Article 3.

The Annexation of Georgia by Russia, 1800.—In previous chapters we have traced the earlier phases of those relations between Russia and Persia which were now to prove disastrous for the latter. The death of Catherine and the accession of the Emperor Paul had caused the struggle for Georgia to cease for a while, but in due course it was renewed.

Gurgin, or George, who had succeeded his father Heraclius, had submitted to Fath Ali Shah, thereby turning his back on Russia. But that power was not to be trifled with, and in 1800 George XIII. was compelled to renounce his crown in favour of the Tsar. This surrender was naturally unpopular among the nobles, and Alexander, the younger brother of George, attempted to enlist the support of Turkey or Persia. In this he failed, although it was obviously to the interest of Persia to defend her rights, instead of tamely allowing Georgia to be annexed by her rival. A rising supported by the Khan of Karabagh and the Avars was defeated by General Lazaroff, who afterwards captured Ganja, which he treated with severity. Georgia was then formally annexed to the Russian Empire, which was thereby brought into direct contact with Persia.

The Two Campaigns against Russia.—The campaigns which Persia now fought against Russia fall into two distinct periods. The first, in which the Persian army won some successes, ended with a defeat in 1812, and peace was made in 1813, by an agreement known as the treaty of Gulistan. There was then a lull for thirteen years until, in 1826, the claim made by Russia to the district of Gokcha brought on a new war. The Persians found their enemy unprepared and gained some initial successes, but ultimately the Russians penetrated into Azerbaijan and captured Tabriz. This campaign, which was utterly disastrous to Persia, ended with the treaty of Turkomanchai, in 1828.

The Persian Army under Abbas Mirza.—The command of the Persian army was vested in Abbas *Mirza*, the heir-apparent and Governor-General of Azerbaijan, who started the drilling and organizing of Persian troops on European lines. At first Russian instructors were engaged, and in order to overcome the prejudices of his countrymen the Prince donned a European uniform and went through the daily drills himself. A few years later the French Military Mission already mentioned appeared on the scene, and large bodies of troops were drilled into something like an army on the European model, so far as parade movements were concerned. Upon the decline of French influence, English instructors were substituted. This attempt to drill the Persians on European lines, praiseworthy as it was, contributed to the ruin of their country. Her military strength has always lain in mounted tribesmen, who by their mobility could create a desert round a regular force, attack numerically inferior bodies of mounted troops, and remain out of reach of slowly moving infantry. It was such a force as this that Nadir Shah led to Delhi after defeating the Turks by brilliant charges, and nothing but this could hope to baffle a European army. Rawlinson, who at a later period was an instructor of Persian troops, wrote: "System was entirely wanting, whether in regard to pay, clothing, food, carriage, equipage, commissariat, promotion, or command. . . . Truly then may it be said that in

presenting Persia with the boon of a so-called regular army, in order to reclaim her from her unlawful loves with France, we clothed her in the robe of Nessus."[1]

The Erivan Campaign, 1804.—The annexation of Georgia by Russia deeply affected the prestige of Persia, that country having long been her tributary, but actual hostilities between Russia and Persia did not break out until General Sisianoff, apparently without a formal declaration of war, marched on Erivan, which he had reason to believe would be handed over to him by its treacherous governor. The first battle, fought in the neighbourhood of Echmiadzin, the residence of the Armenian patriarch, was indecisive. Not long afterwards the Persian camp was surprised and the army of the heir-apparent fled. After this victory Erivan was besieged, and its governor, who had refused to hand over the fortress, opened fresh negotiations. Fath Ali Shah himself now appeared in the theatre of operations with strong reinforcements. Engagements followed with indecisive results, but by preventing munitions and supplies from reaching the Russian camp, the Shah forced General Sisianoff to retire from the siege of Erivan, harassed by the light Persian cavalry.

The Russian Descent on Gilan.—The next important operation was a Russian descent on Resht. As travellers to Teheran know, its seaport is Enzeli, behind which lies a shallow lagoon some twelve miles across, navigable only by small boats. After this body of water has been traversed a narrow river is entered, up which boats are towed to Pir-i-Bazar, distant some three or four miles from the capital of Gilan.

The Russian general, unable to transport his guns by boats, of which only a small number were forthcoming, attempted to march round the lagoon. But the marshy nature of the soil and the attacks of the inhabitants were obstacles too formidable to be faced, and the order was given to retire on Enzeli. The expedition then sailed to Baku and bombarded it. The Governor was invited to

[1] In the recent struggles the Persian regular army has played no part whatever. It is now being disbanded.



From a photograph by the Author.

A TYPICAL KURDISH VILLAGE.

surrender, but at a conference held under its walls General Sisianoff was treacherously assassinated. Meanwhile Ganja had surrendered to Abbas *Mirza*, but was retaken by the Russians. The campaign dragged on with indecisive results, although the Russians occupied the greater part of the disputed territories, but they were repulsed a second time with loss from before Erivan. The Persians were anxious to engage the services of General Malcolm, but this was not permitted. He gave them, however, the wise advice to keep their artillery and newly raised infantry for the defence of fortresses, and to raise swarms of light horsemen to harass and distress the enemy.

The Battle of Aslanduz, 1812.—In 1812 a decisive battle was fought. Sir Gore Ouseley, who was attempting to act as mediator, having heard that Great Britain had concluded peace with Russia, ordered the British officers to leave the Persian service, but so far yielded to Persian entreaties as to allow Christie and Lindsay to remain. The Persian army was at Aslanduz on the Araxes, and there it was surprised in broad daylight by a Russian column consisting of only 2300 men with six guns. Christie formed up the infantry and was holding his own, when Abbas *Mirza*, thinking all was lost, directed him to retreat; upon his demurring, the Persian heir-apparent himself galloped up, seized the colours of a regiment and ordered the men to retire. The artillery was also compelled to follow, and but for the action of Lindsay, who dashed into the camp and seized some rounds of ammunition, would have been useless. Abbas *Mirza* made the disaster complete by giving wildly contradictory commands, and as a result his army was annihilated. Gallant Christie, wounded in the neck, was killed by the enemy. Lenkoran, the next Russian objective, was taken at the end of the year. After these two disasters the Persians were disheartened and thought of making peace.

The Treaty of Gulistan, 1813.—At the request of the Russian Governor-General of Georgia, Sir Gore Ouseley used his good offices, and on the 12th of October, 1813, a treaty was signed. Its terms were disastrous to Persia.

She ceded Georgia, Derbent, Baku, Shirwan, Shaki, Genja, Karabagh and part of Talish. She also agreed indirectly to maintain no navy on the Caspian Sea.[1] Russia, in return, apparently bound herself to support Abbas *Mirza* in securing the succession. Thus for his personal advantage the heir-apparent conceded to Russia the whole of the territories in dispute. That power, owing to the invasion of Napoleon, was in no condition to continue the campaign, and probably would have accepted less—for the time being. Persia, on her side, hoped by means of British officers to strengthen her position and then to try the fortune of war again. In other words, the peace was a temporary and not a final settlement.

Risings in Persia.—Fath Ali Shah, partly at any rate owing to the defeats he had suffered at the hands of Russia, was faced with risings in various parts of the empire as well as with raids from outside. The chiefs of Khorasan, who had always resented the supremacy of the Kajars, rose against his son Mohamed Vali *Mirza*. They obtained possession of Meshed, but then began to quarrel and dispersed. As a sequel to this rebellion Ishak Khan, the powerful Karai chief, was strangled by the Governor-General. In the meanwhile the Amir of Bokhara invaded Khorasan at the invitation of the rebels, but, finding that the authority of the Shah had been re-established, made excuses and retired. The Khan of Khiva also appeared on the scene, but his envoy was humiliated by being forced to play on a musical instrument before the Persian generals. After this deadly insult his army was defeated. The Turkoman also revolted twice. On the second occasion their leader was a Kajar noble, but they were driven off and he was captured.

The Embassy of General Yermeloff, 1817.—After the conclusion of the peace it was vainly hoped that through English intercession part of the lost territories would be restored. The Tsar sent General Yermeloff with a splendid embassy to Teheran, but instead of yielding

[1] When this stipulation was discussed at Teheran, *Haji Mirza* Aghasi, afterwards the Vizier of Mohamed Shah, summed up the situation by exclaiming, "What do we want with salt water!" The agreement is given in Appendix v. of *Aitchison's Treaties*.

up a square foot of the territories ceded to Russia, he proposed an alliance against Turkey. Further demands were for the passage through Astrabad and Khorasan of a Russian army destined to invade Khiva, and for the establishment of a Russian agent at Resht. All these proposals, together with an offer to supply Russian officers to train the Persian army, were politely refused, and the Russian envoy, after being magnificently entertained, left Teheran loaded with gifts.

Afghan Campaigns, 1805 *and* 1817–1818.—We must now return for a short while to Afghanistan. In A.H. 1222 (1805) the erstwhile refugee Firuz *Mirza*, who was Governor of Herat, attempted to capture Ghorian, a fortress on the frontier which had remained in Persian hands. He was defeated and, being followed up to the gates of Herat, agreed to pay to Persia arrears of tribute for two years and to give his son as a hostage for his good faith. Twelve years later, in 1817, Hasan Ali *Mirza*, a son of Fath Ali Shah, marched to Herat to punish a further attack on Ghorian. Again Firuz *Mirza* bought off the invaders by a payment of fifty thousand tomans and by ordering the public prayers to be read and the coinage to be stamped in the name of Fath Ali Shah. After the departure of the Persian army he was alarmed at the possible consequences of his acts and asked for military assistance from Kabul. Mahmud Shah, who had been released from prison, and had driven Shah Shuja into exile at Ludhiana, was the nominal Amir of Afghanistan, but Fatteh Khan Barakzai, his Vizier, was all-powerful, and at his instance Firuz *Mirza* was treacherously seized and deported to Kabul. The chiefs of Khorasan were then incited to rise against the Shah, and the Khan of Khiva was persuaded to invade the province in the interests of Afghanistan.

Hasan Ali *Mirza* met this critical situation with firmness. In 1818 he attacked Fatteh Khan, who was defeated and wounded. Shortly afterwards Fath Ali Shah reached the theatre of war with a large force and Mahmud Shah purchased immunity from invasion by agreeing to blind his Vizier, who was afterwards barbarously executed.

This act led to the downfall of the Durranis; for Dost Mohamed, brother and avenger of the murdered man, took up arms and after eight years of anarchy obtained possession of the throne of Afghanistan, which his descendants still occupy. Herat, however, remained faithful to Mahmud and after his death to his son Kamran *Mirza*.[1]

Hostilities with Turkey, A.H. 1236–1238 (1821–1823).—The last campaign fought between Persia and Turkey originated from the action of the Governor of Erzeroum, who took under his protection two nomadic tribes that had fled from Azerbaijan. Abbas *Mirza* made representations, but his agent was imprisoned and he was then instructed to invade the Turkish dominions. The Turks being weak, all the districts adjacent to Azerbaijan, including Kurdistan, were occupied. Farther south, the Pasha of Baghdad attempted to invade Persia, but was defeated by Mohamed Ali *Mirza*, the Shah's eldest son.[2] The routed army was pursued to the gates of the city, which lay at the mercy of the Prince. But illness caused him to retreat, and upon reaching the hills he died.

Meanwhile hostilities continued in the north. A Turkish detachment a thousand strong was captured by a force operating from Erivan, but was released without ransom by Abbas *Mirza*, who throughout showed no desire to push matters too far. The campaign ended with a battle in which the Persians, although inferior in numbers, gained a hard-fought victory. In the southern zone all military operations were stopped because the Persian army suffered from cholera, which is stated to have made its first appearance in Persia on this occasion. Peace was concluded in the end by the treaty of Erzeroum, signed in A.H. 1238 (1823). Its terms involved no territorial changes.

The Dispute about Gokcha and its Seizure by Russia, 1825.—The treaty of Gulistan had been so vaguely worded that three districts lying between Erivan and the Gokcha

[1] Kamran *Mirza* had a feud with Fatteh Khan and induced his father, whose fears he excited, to give the order for his execution, which order he brought in person to Herat and executed.

[2] It is stated that Mohamed Ali *Mirza*, when a boy, was asked by Aga Mohamed what he would do if he became Shah. "I would kill you," was the reply. This frank expression resulted in the appointment of Abbas *Mirza*, the second son, as heir-apparent.

116a



From a photograph by Athelstan Riley.

CHRISTIAN TRIBESMEN IN KURDISTAN.

Lake, the most important of which was Gokcha, remained in dispute. Negotiations were carried on between General Yermeloff, the Governor-General of the Caucasus, and Abbas *Mirza*, but, no agreement being reached, Gokcha was occupied by Russian troops. In consequence of this high-handed act, the intense feeling of hostility to Russia which had been excited by her conquests and by her contemptuous treatment of her new Moslem subjects broke out into a national demonstration in favour of war. Abbas *Mirza* was only too anxious to retrieve his lost reputation, and from every province of Persia recruits in thousands flocked to his standard. A Russian envoy, Prince Menchikoff, was despatched to the court of Teheran upon the accession of Tsar Nicholas, and it was hoped by the peace-loving Shah that a satisfactory arrangement would be effected ; but the Russian Prince had no instructions to surrender Gokcha, and his mission did nothing to satisfy Persian public opinion, which was deeply stirred.

Initial Persian Successes.—The first act of hostility was an attack on a Russian force by the hereditary chief of Talish, whose wife was in their hands. This was followed by an assault on Lenkoran, which was abandoned by its garrison.

In the main theatre of war the Russians were unprepared, and at first the Persians carried all before them. An entire Russian regiment was captured marching towards Shisha, and one half of the prisoners entered the service of the Shah. The Moslems of Ganja massacred the Russian garrison, and the Persians raided up to the gates of Tiflis. So successful were they that in less than a month Shirwan, Shaki, Talish, and Ganja had all been reoccupied by the troops of the Shah. Shisha, however, defied all the efforts of Abbas *Mirza*.

The Battle of Shamkar.—Russia meanwhile had been concentrating an army at Tiflis, and the first battle was fought at Shamkar, in the vicinity of Ganja, by a Russian division of nine thousand men against a Persian force of equal strength. The Persian cavalry, demoralized by the Russian artillery fire, fled and was pursued by Cossacks along the rear of the Persian infantry. Seeing this, the

Russian main body advanced, and the Persians were routed, leaving their artillery in the hands of the enemy. In this battle Mohamed *Mirza* (afterwards Mohamed Shah), who was in command, was actually made prisoner by the Cossacks, but was rescued through the courage of a Shah Savan chief.

The Battle of Ganja, 26th September, 1826.—Abbas *Mirza* immediately hastened north with thirty thousand men to repair the disaster, and was met by General Paskievich, with an army only half as strong, on a level plain to the east of Ganja. The Persian artillery, directed by its English officer, caused a Russian division to retreat and two Karadagh regiments charged. Had the entire line advanced at this juncture the day might have been won; for the Russian artillery was badly served. Unfortunately for Persia, Abbas *Mirza* again behaved as he had done at Aslanduz, and his sons received orders to retire. These instructions discouraged the whole army, which broke up before a shot had been fired by many of the regiments. Abbas *Mirza*, who was not a coward, did his best to rally his men, but the Asaf-u-Dola, the Vizier, quitted the field at the first alarm and reached the Aras, a hundred and fifty miles distant, by the following night.

The Avarice of Fath Ali Shah.—Avarice was the ruling passion of Fath Ali Shah, and, like the last of the Caliphs, he preferred to hoard jewels and gold rather than to expend money on national defence. For this reason the steps taken to collect a new army were inadequate. Moreover his sons refused to serve under the now discredited Abbas *Mirza*. The arsenal at Tabriz was found to be practically empty, the money devoted to it having been embezzled, and even such cannon balls as there were did not fit the guns. An attempt was made to buy lead locally, but very little was obtained. Meanwhile winter came on and, owing to the Shah's refusal to furnish pay, the army was disbanded. General Yermeloff made prompt use of reinforcements which reached him, and after the Astrakhan division had driven the Shah's troops out of Derbent another division crossed the Aras and threatened Tabriz, which lay at the mercy of a determined enemy. It was,

however, spared, and the Russian General retired without effecting anything of importance.

The Capture of Erivan, 1827.—In 1827 General Paskievich, who had succeeded to the chief command, again besieged Erivan, but for the third time this fortress defied the Russians. Shortly afterwards Abbasabad, a strong position on the Aras near Nakhchivan, was taken by treachery. This blow disheartened the Persians and fruitless efforts were made to conclude peace.

A victory, however, was at last gained by Abbas *Mirza* in the neighbourhood of Echmiadzin over a Russian force under General Karkovski, consisting of five thousand infantry, one thousand cavalry, and twelve guns. The Persians were equal in infantry, but stronger in cavalry and artillery. The latter arm was ably served, and the Persian troops, anxious to regain their lost reputation, charged boldly. The Russian General was killed, and but for time lost by the Persians in cutting off the heads of their enemies the Russian force would have been annihilated. As it was, a large number reached the friendly shelter of Echmiadzin. Notwithstanding this victory, Fath Ali Shah refused to continue the supply of money necessary to keep the army in the field, and the Sirdar, deserted by his monarch, at last surrendered Erivan to General Paskievich, who was granted in consequence the title Count of Erivan.

The Surrender of Tabriz, 1827.—The Shah's avarice led to a still greater disaster. Learning the defenceless state of Tabriz, Paskievich despatched a small force of five thousand men, to which the city was surrendered by the leading inhabitants without a struggle. By this success the Russians gained possession of the arsenal, of almost the entire artillery park, and of the families of the leaders. There was consequently no use in prolonging the hopeless struggle and it was left to the Russians to dictate the terms on which peace would be made.

The Treaty of Turkomanchai, 1828.—The victors were embarrassed by hostilities with Turkey, and their demands, although not light, cannot be called exorbitant. The chief articles included the cession to Russia of the fertile

provinces of Erivan and Nakhchivan and the payment of an indemnity fixed at ten crores[1] of tomans, equivalent to thirty million silver roubles, or rather more than £3,000,000.

The new frontier was laid down in detail in Article 4 of the treaty.[2] It followed the River Aras eastward as far as the 48th parallel of longitude. At this point it trended to the south, giving part of Talish, including Lankoran, to Russia, and then eastward again to the Caspian Sea, which it reached at Astara. By the seventh Article Abbas *Mirza* was formally recognized as heir to the throne of Persia, and by the tenth Russia acquired the right to nominate Consuls or commercial agents "wherever the good of commerce may require." A separate compact dealt with the question of "Commerce and the Security of Subjects." By its terms 5 per cent was agreed to for the customs' charges on exports and imports; Russian officials were allowed to import goods intended for their personal use free of charge and were also allowed to protect their Persian employés. Finally, they retained power over their own subjects.

This treaty marked the beginning of a new era, since Persia from that time ceased to be the entirely independent power that had been courted by France and England. France had left the arena, and England was not slow to see the changed position. The treaty is scarcely less important from another point of view; for it is the basis on which all western nations have since conducted their intercourse with Persia, and the extra-territorial privileges it introduced for Russians have been extended to other Europeans and are in force to this day. The negotiations, which began in the month of November 1827, were not concluded until the following February, the aged Shah having refused to unlock the doors of his treasure-house. He was afraid, moreover, that the money might be used by General Paskievich to finance a new campaign against Persia. Fortunately the British Minister, Sir John Macdonald, was able to reassure the Shah on this point,

[1] A Persian *crore* is half a million.
[2] *Vide Aitchison's Treaties*, Appendix XVI.

and at last the treaty was signed. The royal consent was given only just in time, for Paskievich was preparing to march on Teheran and had been promised by the disloyal chiefs of Azerbaijan the support of fifteen thousand cavalry.

The Modification of the Definitive Treaty with Great Britain.—The Persian Government held that the occupation of the district of Gokcha by Russia was the cause of the war and that Great Britain was consequently bound by the Definitive Treaty of 1814 to come to her aid. The British view, and the just view, was that Persia had waged an aggressive war. It was, however, realized that, had Russia been the aggressor and had her troops invaded Persian territory, Great Britain would have been placed in the awkward position of supporting the Shah in a war waged against a power with which she herself was on friendly terms. Sir John Macdonald, who had come to the rescue of Abbas *Mirza* by advancing him money in his dire need, succeeded in negotiating an agreement by which, in return for a payment of 200,000 tomans, Articles 3 and 4 of the treaty were cancelled.[1] This sum of money was urgently needed by Abbas *Mirza*, and upon its receipt General Paskievich evacuated Tabriz. The cancelling of the two articles by Sir John Macdonald proves that that able diplomatist had realized the change in the position of Persia referred to above ; a change which had already been indicated by the transfer of the direction of affairs at Teheran from London to Calcutta. By this deletion of treaty provisions that would have been inapplicable to the new situation he rendered a signal service to Great Britain, while the cash payment was invaluable to her stricken ally.

The Murder of Grebaiodov, 1828.—The year in which the treaty of Turkomanchai was signed was singularly un-

[1] *Aitchison's Treaties*, p. 57. Article 3 of the Definitive Treaty, after declaring its purpose to be "strictly defensive" and its object that of "repelling the aggression of enemies," went on to state that "the limits of the territories of the two States of Russia and Persia shall be determined according to the admission of Great Britain, Persia and Russia." Article 4 provided that, in case any European nation invaded Persia, Great Britain should, if the Persian Government required assistance, send from India "the force required," or, in lieu thereof, should pay an annual subsidy of two hundred thousand tomans towards the cost of a Persian army. But this subsidy was not to be paid if the war was "produced by an aggression on the part of Persia."

fortunate for Persia. By the terms of that instrument the third instalment of the indemnity had to be handed over to the Russian representative on the 27th of August, failing which, that power had the right to annex Azerbaijan. With characteristic Persian levity, no arrangements were made for the payment of this money, and but for the friendly vigilance of the British Envoy it would not have been forthcoming.

In the autumn a special mission under M. Grebaiodov reached Teheran from the Tsar. It was received with much distinction and honour, but the Envoy's claim that two Armenian women should be given up by the Asaf-u-Dola created much ill-feeling. The women were surrendered, but the decision of the chief *Mujtahid* that it was lawful to rescue them from the hands of the infidels caused a riot. The bazaars were shut, a mob stormed the Legation, and the Envoy and his staff were murdered. The Shah, in utter dismay, despatched his grandson Khusru *Mirza* to offer the apologies of the Persian Government and to express horror at the outrage. Russia was engaged at the time in hostilities with Turkey and was unwilling to drive Persia by any act of harshness to side with that power. Consequently, not only were the demands of Russia limited to the exile of the chief *Mujtahid* and the punishment of the guilty individuals, but in addition Tsar Nicholas generously remitted a crore of tomans of the war indemnity.



MOHAMED SHAH.

CHAPTER LXXVII

PERSIAN AGGRESSION ON AFGHANISTAN

We consent to the whole of the demands of the British Government. We will not go to war. Were it not for the sake of friendship we should not relinquish the siege of Herat.—The Statement of MOHAMED SHAH.

The Trend of Persian Policy, 1832–1857.—The last chapter was a recital of defeats and losses suffered by Persia at the hand of Russia. The present chapter and the following one are mainly an account of the persistent though unsuccessful efforts made by the defeated power to recover provinces on the eastern confines of the empire in order to balance heavy losses in the west. These campaigns against Afghanistan were viewed with apprehension by rulers of India, since it was realized that, if the policy of Persia were successful, Russian agents and Russian influence would be established to the south of the Hindu Kush. The Government of India, therefore, made strenuous efforts to keep Afghanistan outside the spheres of influence of both Russia and Persia, not shrinking from an Afghan campaign, from costly missions, or even from war with her old ally Persia. During the period dealt with, from 1832 to 1857, the main Persian objective was Herat, which was besieged more than once and for a short period actually occupied.

The Campaign of Abbas Mirza in Khorasan.—The disasters suffered in the campaign with Russia reacted on the internal situation of Persia, more especially in Khorasan, where the Kajar dynasty was peculiarly detested. Abbas *Mirza* was entrusted with the task of restoring

order and defending Persian rights, and the energy and skill with which he conducted his last campaign must be set against his previous failures. He marched first to Yezd, which had rebelled, and then to Kerman, and in both provinces succeeded in reviving public confidence. In Khorasan, Khusru *Mirza* opened the campaign by the siege of Turshiz. The fall of this fortress caused many of the leading chiefs to submit, but the *Ilkhani* of Kuchan refused to come to terms. Amirabad, a Kurdish stronghold near Chinaran, was taken, and Abbas *Mirza* had the utmost difficulty in stopping the massacre of its inhabitants. Kuchan was next besieged, and the rebel *Ilkhani* in the end submitted and was deposed in favour of his son.

Sarakhs was the next Persian objective. The Khan of Khiva had advanced to its neighbourhood, but retreated upon hearing of the success of the Persian arms and so deserted the Salor Turkoman of Sarakhs. This historical city, which owed its importance to its position at a ford of the Tejen on the great road between Nishapur and Merv, had become a notorious centre of the slave trade, and it was known that there were three thousand Shia captives within its walls. Abbas *Mirza*, after futile negotiations, allowed an hour for the unconditional surrender of the fortress, and when the time had elapsed assaulted and captured it. The Turkoman were massacred, the slaves were released, and enormous booty was collected.

This blow dealt to the Turkoman resounded throughout Central Asia. The Khan of Khiva was permitted to ransom five thousand Salor prisoners at ten tomans a head, but Abbas *Mirza* stipulated that the Salors should escort, and be responsible for, the safety of Persian caravans; that they should agree to have no dealings with slave-dealers; and, finally, that they should pay tribute and furnish a contingent of horsemen when required.

Anglo-Russian Antagonism in Central Asia.—The campaign against Herat in which Persia now engaged was the ultimate cause of the first Afghan war, and it may therefore be well, before describing the operations,

to give some account of the general position in Central Asia. There is no doubt that both Russia and Great Britain at this period were animated—in Asia, at any rate—by feelings of mutual hostility; the interests of the two empires were conceived to be antagonistic, although Russia had not annexed Khiva and the frontier of British India was the Sutlej.

Russian victories over Persia had incited the defeated power to recover her prestige elsewhere, and this very natural desire was encouraged by her former enemy. It was realized on the banks of the Neva that if Persia obtained possession of Herat she would probably take Kabul and Kandahar also. In this case Russian influence would penetrate Afghanistan without any effort on her part, whereas a heavy strain would be thrown on Great Britain to meet the demands of the new situation. If, on the other hand, Great Britain intervened to save Herat, she would be thwarting the natural and just ambitions of Persia and would thereby drive her to lean entirely on Russia. It must not be supposed that Abbas *Mirza* intended to affront Great Britain by an invasion of Afghanistan. To him it seemed only right that ancient provinces of Persia should be won back, and it is impossible not to sympathize with his aspirations.

The Siege of Herat and the Death of Abbas Mirza, 1833.—Herat was at this period held as an independent principality by Kamran *Mirza*, son of Mahmud Shah. His Vizier, the astute Yar Mohamed Khan, proceeded on a mission to the Persian heir-apparent, and was informed by him that unless his master acknowledged the authority of the Shah and paid tribute Herat would be besieged. Kamran *Mirza* sent back an evasive reply and it was thereupon decided to undertake an Afghan campaign.

Abbas *Mirza* was summoned to Court, and the military command was given to Mohamed *Mirza*, who advanced on Ghorian. Unable to capture that stronghold, he left it in his rear and invested Herat. Aided by a Polish officer named Berovski, the young Prince was pressing forward the siege when news was received of the death of Abbas *Mirza*, whose premature decease

was a heavy blow to Persia. A treaty was hastily concluded, by the terms of which Kamran *Mirza* agreed to pay tribute to the Shah and to raze the fortifications of Ghorian; and Mohamed *Mirza* hastened to Teheran, where he was proclaimed heir-apparent. But before quitting Afghan soil he swore a solemn oath that he would return and avenge his failure in Afghan blood.

The Death of Fath Ali Shah, 1834.—In the following year Fath Ali Shah died at the age of sixty-eight, after a reign of thirty-seven years. Apart from his avarice, which, as we have seen, brought disaster upon Persia in her struggle with Russia, he was looked upon as a capable ruler, and in some ways he recalls Solomon in his later years. He certainly was no soldier, and by Persians he is remembered chiefly for his enormous family and his long beard. Many are the stories I have heard from Persian friends about this monarch, and one or two of them may be reproduced.

Of his personal beauty he was inordinately proud, and it is said that, having a mole under his chin where it could not be seen, he insisted on having it reproduced by the Court painter on his cheek. Another story is to the effect that when news was received of the crossing of the Persian frontier by the Russians, the nobles and officials waited with interest to see what action would be taken. The Shah appeared, robed in the "robes of wrath," which were all of red, including a crown studded with rubies, and with a huge ruby in his dagger hilt. The nobles expected him to deliver sentence of death, as was customary when these robes were worn, and listened to his utterances with awe. His Majesty protested that the "ill-omened" Russians had violated the sacred soil of Persia, and enquired, "If we send the household cavalry to attack them what then?" The reply was, "May we be thy sacrifice! They would drive them back to Moscow." "And if we ourselves went?" The nobles gave no reply, but grovelled on the ground and wept at the thought of the woes that the Russians would suffer! Incredible as it may appear, there is no doubt that Fath Ali Shah hoped the Russians would learn that the Shah

had been seated on his throne wearing the "robes of wrath," and that they would be struck with terror and retire. But, unfortunately for the Shah, the Russians are a brave and not an imaginative people.

An interesting description of the appearance of Fath Ali Shah is given by Sir Robert Ker Porter,[1] who travelled through Persia in 1818–20.

He was one blaze of jewels, which literally dazzled the sight on first looking at him; but the details of his dress were these: A lofty tiara of three elevations was on his head, which shape appears to have been long peculiar to the crown of the great king. It was entirely composed of thickly-set diamonds, pearls, rubies, and emeralds, so exquisitely disposed as to form a mixture of the most beautiful colours in the brilliant light reflected from its surface. Several black feathers, like the heron plume, were intermixed with the resplendent aigrettes of this truly imperial diadem, whose bending points were finished with pear-formed pearls of an immense size. The vesture was gold tissue, nearly covered with a similar disposition of jewelry; and crossing the shoulders were two strings of pearls, probably the largest in the world. I call his dress a vesture, because it set close to his person, from the neck to the bottom of the waist, showing a shape as noble as his air.

At that point, it developed downwards in loose drapery, like the usual Persian garment, and was of the same costly materials with the vest. But for splendour, nothing could exceed the broad bracelet round his arms and the belt which encircled his waist; they actually blazed like fire when the rays of the sun met them.

The Accession of Mohamed Shah, 1834.—The death of Fath Ali Shah unchained fierce rivalries, and it was seen that two of his sons, the *Farman Farma* and the *Zil-u-Sultan*, Governors of Fars and Teheran respectively, were prepared to bid for the throne. Fortunately for the rightful heir, the British Envoy, Sir John Campbell, was at Tabriz, and by his assistance, both moral and material, and that of the Russian representative, the new Shah was able to march on Teheran at the head of a considerable force commanded by Sir Henry Lindsay Bethune. The circumstance that he was accompanied by the Ministers of Great Britain and Russia caused the desertion of the

[1] *Travels in Georgia, Persia, etc.*, vol. i. pp. 325–26 (London, 1821).

Zil-u-Sultan's adherents, and the Pretender hastened to submit and was present at the coronation of his nephew. The *Farman Farma* was a more dangerous rival, and the English General was soon marching south to attack him; Isfahan was reached by a forced march and shortly afterwards the rebel army was encountered near Kumishah. I have visited the site of the battle, which was decided by artillery fire, against which the nomad horsemen would not stand. The *Farman Farma* fled, but was captured, and died on the way to prison at Ardebil.

Meanwhile Khorasan had revolted, but its turbulent chiefs submitted. In Laristan and Arabistan also there were outbreaks, but these troubles were put down, partly at any rate thanks to Rawlinson, who had recently arrived in Persia.

The Second British Military Mission.—In 1832–33 Indian interest in Persia was so far aroused that a quantity of arms, ammunition, and accoutrements was presented to the Shah. This handsome gift was followed in 1834 by an important Military Mission, in which all arms of the service were represented. Among the officers who were to win distinction were Rawlinson, Stoddart, Sheil, and D'Arcy Todd. From the start the English officers were treated with jealousy and hostility by the Persians; they had no control over the pay or promotion of the Persian corps, and the young Shah did not support them. In 1836 the members of the English Mission at the royal camp were dismissed with insult; and in 1838, when Sir John McNeill hauled down his flag and broke off relations with Persia, all the British officers left with him.

Haji Mirza Aghasi.—Upon his accession Mohamed Shah brought from Tabriz his Minister, known as the *Kaim Makam*, or Deputy Governor. This personage had established an extraordinary ascendancy over his master, but as he insisted on directing every branch of the administration himself even the rough machinery of the Persian Government came to a standstill. When the position was realized by Mohamed Shah the un-



Eugene Flandin

A SHRINE AT KUMISHAH.

fortunate minister was strangled. He was succeeded by *Haji Mirza* Aghasi, who had been tutor to the Shah and who was both ignorant and fanatical, his attitude towards all foreigners being one of profound suspicion.

The Afghan Policy of Mohamed Shah.—The death of Fath Ali Shah, who had been friendly to Great Britain, and the accession of Mohamed Shah, who was almost entirely under Russian influence, was disadvantageous to British policy, as was speedily proved.

No sooner was the new Shah firmly established on the throne than he organized a large force for a second Afghan campaign. Kamran *Mirza* had failed to pay tribute, had not destroyed the fortifications of Ghorian, and had added to his offences by the execution of some Persians. Beyond the question of Herat lay that of Sistan, which Persia coveted and claimed as one of her provinces, and its annexation at this period by Kamran *Mirza* was an additional affront. The British position was diplomatically very weak, as it had been agreed in the Definitive Treaty that Great Britain should not interfere in case of war between Persia and Afghanistan. Nevertheless, since the extension of Persian sovereignty would involve the posting of Russian agents nearer India, the British Envoy used all his influence to suspend the expedition.

The Rise of Dost Mohamed.—After the final expulsion of Mahmud from Kabul, Mohamed Azim, a brother of Fatteh Khan, governed as the Vizier of a puppet Sadozai prince; but after his death his brother, Dost Mohamed, the son of a Kizilbash woman of low origin, gradually proved himself the strongest member of the family. As is almost invariably the case in Afghanistan, his brothers were his most bitter enemies, especially Sultan Mohamed, who, after failing to seize Kabul, held Peshawar as a province of the Sikh kingdom. In spite of many vicissitudes of fortune, Dost Mohamed had by the year 1826 obtained undisputed possession of Kabul, and during the next eight years he ruled in comparative peace, of which he took the fullest advantage not only for strengthening his position but also for improving his

own scanty education. In 1834 Shah Shuja, after obtaining an advance of his pension from the Government of India, made a desperate attempt to recover the throne. He defeated Kuhandil Khan, brother of Dost Mohamed, and besieged Kandahar, but was repulsed in the end by a force from Kabul, led by Dost Mohamed in person.

The Burnes Mission.—In 1836 Lord Auckland, the Governor-General, despatched Alexander Burnes on a "commercial" mission to Kabul, where he was well received by Dost Mohamed, whom he had visited as a traveller four years previously. The wish of the Amir was to reunite to his kingdom Peshawar on the east and Herat on the west, and he hoped that by means of a British alliance he would be able to obtain one, if not both, of his objects. Shortly after the arrival of Burnes, Captain Vitkavich, a Russian "commercial" agent, reached Kabul. He had travelled from Persia *via* Kandahar, and at that city had induced Kuhandil Khan, who was disloyal to his brother, to promise to co-operate with the Persians against Herat.

Dost Mohamed paid little attention to the Russian, and offered to send a force to the assistance of Yar Mohamed Khan, the Vizier of Kamran *Mirza* and the virtual ruler of Herat. In return he stipulated for a subsidy with which to maintain the troops, and for his recognition by the Government of India as Amir of Kabul. Burnes, who was favourably impressed by the Afghan prince, realized that it would be sound policy to strengthen his hands, and in consequence strongly supported his demands for a subsidy and for recognition. With regard to Peshawar he recommended that an arrangement should be made with Ranjit Singh, by which Dost Mohamed should hold the city and pay tribute for it to Lahore, as his brother had done. These reasonable terms were rejected by Lord Auckland, who demanded the dismissal of Vitkavich and the renouncement by Dost Mohamed of all claims to the provinces conquered by Ranjit Singh. Throughout the Governor-General entirely failed to realize the situation, and he censured Burnes for promising his

support to Kuhandil Khan in case of Persian aggression. Even in the matter of presents, which are esteemed by oriental potentates not merely for their value but as adding to the dignity of the recipient in the eyes of his Court, the Mission was furnished scantily and compared most unfavourably with that of Elphinstone, which had bestowed splendid gifts on Shah Shuja. Consequently, through no fault of his own, Burnes failed. Kaye justly denounces the dishonest mutilation of despatches by which Burnes is made to appear responsible for the failure of the mission. In a recent novel, too, written to bring out the great achievement of Eldred Pottinger, Burnes is most unfairly made to serve as a dark background to the hero. As Kaye puts it, "Had Burnes been left to obey the dictates of his own reason and to use the light of his own experience, he would have conciliated both the Candahar Sirdars and the Caubul Ameer, and raised up an effective bulwark in Afghanistan against Persian invasion and Russian intrigue."[1] It remains to add that Sir John McNeill's views on the question were practically identical.

The Promises of Vitkavich.—Dost Mohamed, realizing that the British Government was unwilling to make reasonable proposals to him, now turned to Vitkavich, who promised Russian support and agreed, among other things, that Russian assistance should be given to the Shah in his campaign against Herat. His mission, however, like that of Burnes, was a failure, and in the end he was disowned by the Russian Government and disappeared from the scene.[2] Not content to rely on vague Russian support, Dost Mohamed ultimately strengthened his hands by making a treaty with Mohamed Shah against Kamran *Mirza*;[3] thus through British ineptitude he was forced into taking a step most disadvantageous to British policy.

The Second Siege of Herat, 1837–1838.—In 1836 the Shah wasted the whole season in ineffectual operations

[1] *Op. cit.* i. 311.

[2] He committed suicide. For the facts about Vitkavich *vide England and Russia in the East*, p. 152.

[3] In *Travels and Journals preserved in the Bombay Secretariat*, there is a delightful account of the Afghan embassy to Mohamed Shah, written by the ambassador, who was of Persian origin.

against the elusive Turkoman. In 1837, however, he mustered his army at Shahrud and marched through Khorasan into the Herat province. Forewarned of the impending storm, Yar Mohamed Khan had collected a large proportion of the crops into the city and had destroyed the remainder. He also burned every village situated within twelve miles of Herat. Ten thousand horsemen were instructed to keep the field and harass the enemy, and the various strongholds in the province were garrisoned. The ramparts were repaired and the ditch was cleaned out and deepened. But the greatest asset of all was a young English artillery officer, Eldred Pottinger, who, arriving in disguise, revealed his identity and soon became the life and soul of the defence, and saved the city from its assailants. Incidentally Pottinger raised the prestige of Great Britain in Central Asia, and the Khan of Khiva informed Major Abbot, whom we shall meet later on, that the gallantry of that officer was his first introduction to the British, of whom he had never previously heard.

The Persian army arrived before Herat in November and operations began almost immediately. Foraging parties committed every possible atrocity, and the Shah, to show the spirit in which he was waging war, ordered the first prisoner to be bayoneted in his presence. About a month after the commencement of the siege one of the bastions was taken, but it was soon retaken, and during the winter operations dragged on month after month with no decisive results, the Persian generals working entirely independently of one another and each being rather pleased if a rival general was defeated.

In the spring of 1838 Mr. (afterwards Sir John) McNeill, the British Minister, arrived in the Persian camp and attempted to persuade the disheartened Shah to break off the siege. At the monarch's request he entered Herat and drew up an agreement with Yar Mohamed Khan on behalf of Mohamed Shah. Unfortunately Count Simonich, the Russian Envoy, arrived at this juncture and offered the services of a Russian officer. The Shah, like a true son of Iran, hoped everything from the new-



HERAT CITADEL FROM THE CITY.

(Through the courtesy of Colonel Sir T. H. Holdich.)

comer and for a fortnight would not hear of ratifying the agreement made by the British Minister. As, however, Herat did not fall he began to think of it again; though, still hoping for success, he could not make up his mind to face the loss of prestige which failure would involve. The smallest advantage would buoy him up and a promise of aid from Kandahar made him decide to continue the siege. At the same time he slighted the British Envoy and refused redress when one of his couriers was seized, being under the impression that Great Britain valued the friendship of Persia so highly that she would stand even affronts to her representative.

Matters were in this unsatisfactory state when the Shah, at a private audience, agreed to fulfil the terms of the agreement if the Minister would assure him officially in writing that he would incur the anger of the British Government if the siege were continued. The object of this, it was explained, was to prove to all that the Shah was raising the siege in order to avoid offending Great Britain. The fickle monarch next attempted to extort a large pecuniary payment for complying with the wishes of Great Britain, and in view of the lavishness which had marked previous missions he had good reason to expect some pecuniary aid. This, however, was refused, and so he turned the tables on the Minister by sending him a despatch in which the terms of his communication were treated as an attack upon the sovereign independent rights of the King of Kings. This document and the hostile spirit of the Persian Court induced the British Envoy to quit the royal camp. At Shahrud he received instructions from England to express to the Shah the strongest disapproval of Her Majesty's Government at his conduct in connexion with Herat and to state that Great Britain would regard the occupation of that city as a hostile act. Finally he was to point out that the island of Kharak had been occupied by British troops.

Shortly after the departure of the British Envoy a final effort was made by the Persian army. For six days the defences were battered and a general assault planned by General Simonich was delivered. Thrice the breach

was captured, but the Afghan swordsmen drove the besiegers back and nearly two thousand of them were killed or wounded. Perovski, the Pole, was killed, and Samson, who led the battalion of Russian deserters, was wounded.

The Shah was utterly dejected, though, like a Persian, he derived much consolation from the fact that the plan of attack which failed had been drawn up by a Russian; rumour, too, had magnified the scope of the British operations in the Persian Gulf. He was consequently ready to listen to Colonel Stoddart,[1] who was sent to him by M'Neill, and, after hearing Stoddart's message, replied in the words which form a heading to this chapter. Rumours of the expedition to reinstate Shah Shuja on the throne assisted the triumph of British policy. Simonich lost all influence, and the Shah finally left Herat without coming to any agreement with its ruler. Thus ended the celebrated siege.

The First Afghan War, 1838–1842.—The siege of Herat, which to all appearances was bound to fall into the hands of Persia and to be followed by the capture or submission of Kandahar, if not of Kabul, reacted most unfavourably on the political situation in India. Rumours of a Moslem invasion filled the bazaars, public securities declined in value, and the speedy end of British rule was foretold. Under these adverse conditions Lord Auckland and his advisers decided to make a counter-stroke, and, as they were hostile to Dost Mahomed, Shah Shuja[2] was the chosen instrument of their policy. In the first instance it was proposed to induce Ranjit Singh to co-operate with Shah Shuja by advancing through the Khyber Pass on Kabul, while Shah Shuja himself marched on the capital by Kandahar at the head of an army recruited by himself. This project was duly agreed to by both the principals, but it was then pointed out to Lord Auckland that without a British force it would almost certainly miscarry. As Kaye puts it, since Mohamed Shah was

[1] Stoddart was afterwards sent by Sir John M'Neill to Bokhara, with instructions to make a treaty and obtain the release of Russian prisoners. Owing, perhaps, to the intrigues of Yar Mohamed, he was first imprisoned and then murdered by the Amir.

[2] His full title was Shuja-ul-Mulk, or "The Valour of the Country."

besieging Herat, it was decided that Great Britain should herself make war upon Dost Mohamed, and this was the origin of the First Afghan War, which has been justly censured more than any other waged by Great Britain in Asia.

The plan finally adopted was to march to Herat and raise the siege, to drive Dost Mohamed from Kabul and to put Shah Shuja in his place. The policy of driving Persia from Herat was sound, but from a military point of view the expedition, as originally planned, was almost beyond the resources of the British army in India. The centre where the army assembled was Karnal, and the distance from this frontier cantonment to Kandahar was eleven hundred miles. From Kandahar to Herat was four hundred more. The British force, only twenty thousand strong and encumbered with thousands of followers, would therefore have had to march the enormous distance of fifteen hundred miles through a poor, dry, and possibly hostile country and then meet an enemy not perhaps very formidable in himself, but possibly strengthened by Russian officers and money, if not by Russian regiments. When the losses through hardships, the posting of garrisons at strategical points, and the probability of attacks by the Afghans are all considered, this expedition, it must be confessed, was difficult to carry out from the military point of view, and might well have ended in disaster. Fortunately, before it started news reached India that Mohamed Shah had been baffled before Herat and had marched back to Persia. It might have been thought that with the removal of this really serious menace the necessity for engaging a British army in Afghanistan had passed away.

It was, however, decided that Dost Mohamed, representing the Barakzai dynasty, must be driven out of Afghanistan and Shah Shuja, of the Sadozai family, set up in his place, on the alleged ground that Dost Mohamed's hostility threatened the peace of India, and this in the absence of any extreme necessity and without consulting the Afghans themselves. As long as Mohamed Shah was besieging Herat there were strong reasons for

an expedition, but after his failure there were none of sufficient weight, not to speak of the injustice of invading Afghanistan with the avowed intention of substituting an inefficient ruler for one of exceptional capacity.

Even with the reduced force which it was now determined to employ, the question of supplies, expressed in terms of transport, dominated the military situation throughout, and the losses both in men and camels in the Bolan Pass were very heavy. Kandahar was fortunately undefended, and the army was able to rest in a relatively fertile centre. There was, indeed, no resistance until Ghazni was reached. Sir Henry Durand (then a lieutenant in the Bengal Engineers) gallantly blew up the Kabul Gate of this city, which alone had not been bricked up, the garrison fled panic-stricken, and the army, which was once again on short rations, mainly owing to difficulties of transport, obtained supplies in abundance. This feat of arms, which amazed the Afghans, who deemed Ghazni impregnable, secured a triumphal entry into Kabul in August, 1839, and Dost Mohamed subsequently surrendered.

Two years later there was a reaction, led by Akbar Khan, son of Dost Mohamed. The brigade which had been left to garrison Kabul was badly led, and was finally induced to evacuate its cantonment in midwinter, with the result that four thousand fighting men and twelve thousand followers were cut to pieces while retiring on Jalalabad.

In the spring of 1842 Pollock forced the Khyber and relieved Jalalabad, but it was not until September that Lord Ellenborough, who had succeeded Lord Auckland as Governor-General, permitted Pollock from Jalalabad and Nott from Kandahar to converge on Kabul, which, after some fighting, was occupied by both generals. Meanwhile Shah Shuja had been assassinated, and ultimately Dost Mohamed, whose feelings towards Great Britain must have been particularly bitter, was permitted to return and the British army evacuated Afghanistan. Thus concluded an enterprise which was unjust, inexpedient, and badly led. Its main object was to expel Dost Mohamed, who was ultimately released and restored

to power by Great Britain. At the same time it is easy to exaggerate the military importance of the destruction of a brigade. The loss was avenged, and would in consequence soon be forgotten. Upon the whole, when we consider the enormous distances, the lack of supplies and water, and the bad communications, Great Britain would appear to have been fortunate in suffering only one disaster.

The British Mission to Herat, 1839–1841.—Yar Mohamed Khan[1] was the first to congratulate Shah Shuja upon his restoration to the throne, and it was decided to send a mission from India to Herat and to make a treaty with its ruler. Major D'Arcy Todd, who had been with M'Neill at the siege, was selected for the task, and the mission was "received with every mark of respect by the Monarch and his Minister." A treaty was concluded, by the terms of which the Government of India paid a monthly subsidy of twenty-five thousand rupees, in return for which it was stipulated that all intercourse with Persia should be carried on through the British. As might have been expected, however, the Vizier was unable to refrain from intriguing, and before very long Todd received from the Legation at Teheran the copy of a letter Yar Mohamed had addressed to Mohamed Shah, in which he stated that his hopes rested on the "Asylum of the Universe" and that the English were tolerated merely from motives of expediency.

This was condoned, but after a residence of eighteen months Todd discovered that a mission had been sent by Yar Mohamed to Meshed. He thereupon stopped payment of the subsidy and, a breach ensuing, the British representative, realizing that the Vizier was bitterly hostile, withdrew from Herat.

The Settlement with Persia.—We must now return to Persia. Mohamed Shah, as we have seen, when forced to abandon the siege of Herat, had hastily agreed to fulfil all the demands of the British Government, but he was most unwilling to evacuate Ghorian, Farrah, and Afghan Sabzawar. He was likewise unwilling to apologize to the

[1] In *Caravan Journeys*, by J. P. Ferrier, a good account is given of this consummate scoundrel.

British Minister for the assault upon his courier ; in short, he was thoroughly out of temper at having failed before Herat.

Meanwhile he had despatched a certain Husayn Khan to England with a view to obtaining M'Neill's recall. The envoy was armed with a portentous document in which the Shah protested that the sole object of his expedition had been to rescue Persian subjects from slavery, and complained bitterly of the oppression to which he had been subjected by the British Minister. Unfortunately for the Persian representative, Lord Palmerston was Foreign Minister, and at Vienna he received an intimation that he would not be recognized as a diplomatic agent, and that in the demand for the recall of the British Minister Her Majesty's Government only saw an additional proof that Sir John M'Neill had faithfully and ably performed his duty. With extreme difficulty the Persian Envoy obtained an interview with Palmerston. That statesman finally consented to formulate the demands of the British Government, which were nine in number, and included the evacuation of Ghorian and other Afghan strongholds and a written apology for the ill-treatment of the courier. Lastly it was stipulated that the signature of a commercial treaty must accompany the re-establishment of diplomatic relations. The unsuccessful envoy upon his return "ate many sticks," in other words was severely bastinadoed.

The Rebellion of Aga Khan, 1840–1841.—The vitality of religious sects is remarkable, and Mohamed Shah received an unpleasant reminder of the fact in the rebellion of Aga Khan Mahallati. Descended from the Ismailis who played such a large part on the stage of Persia until Hulagu crushed the noxious sect, as detailed in Chapter LVI., Aga Khan,[1] who was a Persian nobleman and landowner, rose in 1840 and defeated the Governor of Yezd on the borders of the Kerman province. After some further successes he was driven away from Kerman and seized the fort at Bam. Finally he fled to India, where he assisted the British in Sind and settled down in Bombay. In 1844–45 his brother Abul Hasan, known as the *Sirdar*,

[1] *Vide Ten Thousand Miles, etc.*, pp. 68-70 and p. 105.

invaded Persian Baluchistan, but in the end was expelled. The present representative of the family is one of the leading and most enlightened Moslems in India, where his followers are termed Khojas.

Perso-Turkish Relations, 1842–1843.—Since the close of hostilities between Persia and Turkey there had been many causes of mutual complaint, as was only to be expected with an ill-defined frontier inhabited on both sides by wild and turbulent tribesmen.

In 1842 the Kurdish Vali of Ardelan collected his horsemen to support a dismissed Pasha of Sulaymania, whose case the Persian Government had taken up with slight success, and to meet this force Turkish troops assembled on their side of the frontier. A Kurdish detachment was sent to occupy a defile in rear of the Turkish position, but the manœuvre was rendered unavailing by the defeat of the Vali of Ardelan. The matter was misrepresented at Teheran; the Shah gave orders for an army to be assembled, and an outbreak of hostilities appeared to be imminent. Great Britain and Russia, however, used their good offices, and war was averted. Subsequently a commission was formed for delimiting the frontier, and the peace was not broken. In the following year religious opinion in Persia was outraged by an attack on Kerbela and a massacre of its inhabitants. Although this city is on Turkish soil, the cry for war was universal and extensive military preparations were made; but the Turkish Government expressed regret and promised compensation, and hostilities were again avoided.

The Death of Mohamed Shah, 1848.—Mohamed Shah from boyhood had been a martyr to gout, and when he reached his fortieth year he was attacked by a complication of maladies to which he succumbed. His differences with Great Britain and his failure before Herat, combined with ill-health, had soured his character, which was certainly bigoted and cruel; but according to his lights he was not a bad Shah. The state of Persia, however, was not satisfactory; for *Haji Mirza* Aghasi, who had been its virtual ruler for thirteen years, "was utterly ignorant of statesmanship or of military science, yet too vain to receive

instruction and too jealous to admit of a coadjutor; brutal in his language; insolent in his demeanour; indolent in his habits; he brought the exchequer to the verge of bankruptcy and the country to the brink of revolution. The pay of the army was generally from three to five years in arrears. The cavalry of the tribes was almost annihilated." Such—to adopt the weighty words of Rawlinson—was the condition of Persia in the middle of the nineteenth century.

MOHAMED SHAH.

CHAPTER LXXVIII

THE FINAL SETTLEMENT OF THE PERSO-AFGHAN QUESTION

His Majesty the Shah of Persia agrees to relinguish all claims to sovereignty over the territory and city of Herat and the countries of Afghanistan, and never to demand from the chiefs of Herat, or of the countries of Afghanistan, any marks of obedience, such as the coinage or "Khutba," or tribute.

His Majesty further engages to abstain hereafter from all interference with the internal affairs of Afghanistan. His Majesty promises to recognize the independence of Herat and of the whole of Afghanistan, and never to attempt to interfere with the independence of those States.

In case of differences arising between the Government of Persia and the countries of Herat and Afghanistan the Persian Government engages to refer them for adjustment to the friendly offices of the British Government, and not to take up arms unless those friendly offices fail of effect.

The Treaty of Paris, Art. 6.

The Accession of Nasir-u-Din, 1848.—After the death of Mohamed Shah there was no opposition to the accession of the Heir-Apparent, whose age was sixteen. Disorders, however, broke out in the provinces, and the capital was the scene of intrigues, mainly directed against *Haji Mirza* Aghasi. On the advice of the British and Russian ministers he withdrew from the direction of affairs. Nasir-u-Din reached Teheran from Tabriz about six weeks after the decease of his father, and was crowned at midnight.

Mirza Taki Khan, Amir-i-Nizam.—In Persia the Vizier almost invariably plays a preponderating rôle, and therefore at a time when it seemed possible that the country would break up the choice of a chief Minister by the new Shah was most important. Usually the post is filled by a man of humble origin, and to this rule *Mirza* Taki Khan was no exception. His father was cook, and

afterwards steward, of the Kaim Makam, the first Vizier of Mohamed Shah. The son entered the service of the Persian Commander-in-Chief and went to St. Petersburg in his suite on the occasion of the embassy of Khusru *Mirza*. His promotion was rapid until he became Vizier of the army of Azerbaijan. Later on he represented Persia on the frontier commission which met at Erzeroum. *Mirza* Taki Khan's last appointment was that of Chief Officer of the Heir-Apparent, who, when he came to the throne, not unnaturally appointed him Chief Minister. He disarmed jealousy as far as possible by refusing the title of *Sadr-i-Aazam*, or "Prime Minister," and assumed that of *Amir-i-Nizam*, or "Chief of the Army."

The new Vizier was determined to remedy the various existing abuses, such as the sale of appointments and governorships, the enormous number of pensions granted to unworthy persons, and the robbery of the soldiers by their officers. At first he made little way, as few Persians could credit the existence of a minister who was both truthful and incorruptible. Gradually, however, the word was passed round that bribery and corruption were of no avail, and with some public opinion at his back he reformed abuse after abuse, and placed the finances of the country on something resembling a business-like footing. Naturally his reforms raised up a host of enemies, among whom was the powerful Queen-mother, but the young Shah at first supported him loyally, and even gave him his own sister in marriage.

The Rebellion of the Salar.—In Persia the Turks of Azerbaijan play the leading part. By custom the Heir-Apparent governs this province, and upon succeeding to the throne marches to Teheran surrounded by his staff of Turks. The army, too, and certainly the most trustworthy portion of it, is mainly recruited in this province, which also supplies all the artillerymen. Consequently the Kajar dynasty came to be identified with "the Turks," and in many cases risings were inspired by hatred of these alien garrisons; for the inhabitants of Azerbaijan speak little or no Persian.

Towards the close of the reign of Mohamed Shah a

young Kajar Khan known as the Salar, son of the Asaf-u-Dola, had rebelled. He had induced many of the chiefs of Khorasan to join him, but they deserted and he was forced to seek refuge among the Turkoman together with Jafar Kuli Khan, chief of Bujnurd. Shortly afterwards the two rebels returned to Khorasan and reoccupied Bujnurd. Again they were attacked and again they fled, Jafar Kuli Khan taking refuge on this occasion with Yar Mohamed Khan of Herat.

The death of Mohamed Shah gave the Pretender his chance, and before long, owing to hatred of the Turks, almost all the chiefs of Khorasan had joined the young Khan, whose personality was attractive and courage undoubted. Yar Mohamed Khan brought two thousand sowars to Meshed as a reinforcement for Hamza *Mirza*, the Persian Governor-General, who had promised him twenty guns and two frontier posts in return for his assistance. But the forces of the Salar were too strong, and Meshed was evacuated, the Governor-General retiring in the direction of the Afghan frontier. Meanwhile a force of six thousand infantry under Sultan Murad *Mirza* reached Khorasan from Teheran and, mainly owing to the desertion of the Bujnurd chief, the Salar was driven to shut himself up in Meshed, where he was besieged for eighteen months. Finally the citizens of the Sacred City entered into negotiations with the besiegers, and surrendered Meshed and the Salar. The Pretender was tortured in barbarous fashion to make him reveal his treasure, and was then strangled. He was buried in the shrine of Khoja Rabi, close to the city.

The Bab.—Among the latest religions to which Asia has given birth is that of the Bab. Its founder, *Sayyid* Ali Mohamed,[1] born in 1820, was the son of a grocer of Shiraz, who evincing a religious disposition was sent to Kerbela, where he studied at the feet of celebrated doctors of law and gained distinction for the austerities he practised and for his love of learning. At the age of

[1] These sections are based on *The Episode of the Bab*, *The New History of the Bab*, and the article in the *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*: in each case the author is Prof. E. G. Browne. A brief account of the sect is also given in *The Sword of Islam* by Sir A. Wollaston.

twenty-four he proclaimed himself the *Bab*, or "Gate," intimating thereby that he was the "Gate" through which men might attain to knowledge of the Twelfth Imam. In the same year the Bab, as he was thenceforth termed, undertook the pilgrimage to Mecca and on returning by way of Bushire attracted considerable attention, followers gathering round him in large numbers. Encouraged by this support, he determined to convert his own city to his doctrines. In spite of the fact that his representative was bastinadoed and mutilated by the Governor—the same Husayn Khan who had been unsuccessful as an envoy to England—the Bab entered Shiraz. Confronted with the doctors of law, he declared that the mission of Mohamed was ended and that he himself had come to inaugurate a new era. The astonished assembly requested a written statement of his claims, but when this was presented it was found to be illegible. The Bab was consequently pronounced a madman and was beaten and imprisoned.

His followers meanwhile increased in numbers and persecutions were instituted. An attack was made by the Shirazis on the house where the founder of the sect was imprisoned, but he escaped to Isfahan. After a while he was sent in captivity to Maku, in the extreme north-west corner of Persia, and thence to Chihrik, near Urumia, where he declared himself to be the Imam Mahdi.

Finally he was ordered to execution at Tabriz. In the great square he received the volley of a firing party, and when the smoke rolled away he was not to be seen. The shots had cut his ropes and he had fled. Had he gained the town he might have escaped, and his religion would have been firmly established by the miracle—as it would have been deemed. Unfortunately for himself, he took refuge in the guard-room, where he was found. He was at once taken back to the square and shot.

His Doctrines.—His doctrines, as expounded in the *Bayan*, or "Book of Doctrine," are mystical and obscure. To quote Wollaston, "God is Eternal and Unapproachable. All things come from Him and exist by Him. Man cannot approach Him except through some appointed



From a photograph by Major W. R. Battye.

THE SHRINE OF KHOJA RABI.

medium. So, distinct from God, there is a Primal Will which becomes incarnate in the prophets. This Primal Will spoke in the Bab, and will speak in 'him whom God shall manifest'; and after him through others, for there is no cessation in these manifestations."

Browne points out that the doctrines "formed together a system bold, original and, to the Persian mind, singularly attractive; but, taken separately, there was hardly one of which he could claim to be the author, and not very many which did not mount to a remote antiquity." He goes on to point out that the title of *Bab*[1] had been already assumed by the four intimates of the Twelfth Imam, and that other theories advanced were those of the Ismailis. Even the virtues of the number nineteen, the "Number of the Unity," were not new.

I have made no special study of Babiism, as for an official this would be difficult, and my connexion with members of the sect has been principally confined to saving their lives in times of persecution. Students, however, notice that in its modern development there is an increasingly close connexion with Christian ideals and practices in Western Asia, whereas in Persia the converts remain practically Moslems of the Shia sect and find difficulty in assimilating the spirit of the new teaching.

The Fortunes of the Babis.—Mirza Yahya, a youth of nineteen known as Subh-i-Ezel, or "Morning of Eternity," who had apparently been nominated by the Bab, succeeded him after his execution, and for some years (from 1850–68) his position was undisputed. In 1852, owing to the persecution referred to below, he fled to Baghdad, and ten years later he and his followers were transferred to Adrianople at the request of the Shah.

The Subh-i-Ezel was too peace-loving and unworldly to control a community of enthusiasts, and gradually the direction of affairs fell entirely into the hands of his elder half-brother, the Baha Ulla, or "Splendour of God."

[1] The Shaykhis of Kerman (*Ten Thousand Miles, etc.*, p. 196) claim for their leader that he is a *Shia-i-Kamil*, or "Perfect Shia," who serves as a "Channel of Grace" between the absent Imam and his church. I am afraid that I offended the late head of the Shaykhis, for whom I had great respect, by writing that the "Channel of Grace' did not differ materially from the "Gate."

For a while Baha Ulla acted nominally on the instructions of the Subh-i-Ezel, but about 1866 he proclaimed himself as "Him whom God shall manifest" and called upon his brother to acknowledge his supreme authority. There was a desperate conflict between the two parties, but Baha Ulla finally triumphed, only a faithful few clinging to his brother. In 1868 the Turkish Government decided to separate the rivals. Subh-i-Ezel was sent to Cyprus, where he died recently at a great age.[1] Baha Ulla was interned at Acre, and, dying in 1892, was succeeded by his son, Abbas Effendi, although differences arose between the new leader and his younger brother, *Mirza* Mohamed Ali. The present head of the religion, who is generally known as Abdul Baha, or "The Slave of the Splendour," has created a much wider sphere for his activities: he preaches peace and goodwill among men in Europe and America and is more concerned with ethical than with metaphysical questions.

Babi Plots and Risings, 1850–1852.—In 1850 the followers of the Bab attempted to seize the fanatical city of Yezd,[2] but failed and fled to Kerman. A conspiracy was also formed to assassinate the *Amir-i-Nizam*, but it was discovered and the conspirators were seized and executed. Of greater importance was the outbreak in the same year at Zanjan, a town famous for its goldsmiths' work, to the west of Kazvin. The chief *Mulla* had embraced the new doctrines, and he and his followers seized the city. Following in the footsteps of the Kharijites, they tortured to death all prisoners and defied a large Persian army, buoyed up with the hope that they would soon possess the entire world. The siege lasted throughout the summer, but finally their leader, *Mulla* Mohamed Ali, was wounded and died, and their stronghold was captured. Men, women, and children were massacred by the besiegers.

[1] While holding the post of Consul at Kerman I had a correspondence with Subh-i-Ezel, whose daughter had claims on some property. He wrote that he renounced all claims; and it was impossible not to sympathize deeply with the unworldly old man, deserted by practically all his followers.

[2] In 1903 a terrible persecution arose out of a dispute in the bazaar. Any one who wished to settle accounts with an enemy denounced him as a Babi and was given a document signed by the *Mujtahid* ordering his death. Awful atrocities were committed.



From a photograph by Messrs. Lafayette.

ABDUL BAHA.

Two years later the life of the Shah was attempted by four Babis who posed as petitioners. He was wounded in the thigh, and the report was spread of his death. The punishment inflicted on the conspirators was barbarous. At first ten prisoners were executed. In the case of two, lighted candles were stuck into them, and after suffering this torture, they were hacked asunder with a hatchet. A reign of terror then ensued, and the Chief Minister, to avoid concentrating on himself the vengeance of the Babis, distributed the prisoners among the officers of the state,[1] who did them to death.

The Babis, including their famous poetess, the Kurrat-ul-Ayn, or "Coolness of the Eyes," displayed such bravery that they gained sympathy not only among their fellow-countrymen, but also among the Europeans resident in Teheran, and probably their heroic behaviour gained many converts to the new religion.

Foundation of the Russian Naval Station at Ashurada, 1840.—The peculiarity of the southern coast of the Caspian littoral consists in salt lagoons formed by narrow spits of land. That of Enzeli, the port of Resht, has already been referred to, and at Astrabad there is another. In this latter case the long narrow promontory runs out for thirty miles from the western coast and terminates in three small islands, the most easterly of which is close to the eastern coast of the Caspian Sea. In 1836 the Persian Government had applied to the Tsar for naval assistance against Turkoman pirates, who raided the coasts of Mazanderan with impunity. This was granted, and the Russians, realizing the advantage of founding a permanent naval station in the south-east corner of the Caspian, occupied the island of Ashurada[2] about the year 1840. The Government of the Shah remonstrated against this seizure of Persian soil, but without success. The Russian Minister, without denying the validity of the Persian claim to the island, pointed out that pirates could be held

[1] The Shah's French doctor excused himself from hacking a Babi to pieces by saying that he killed too many men professionally to increase the number by homicide!

[2] In 1893 I anchored off the island, and I was surprised at its smallness, which is such that during a storm spray sweeps right across it. It is notoriously unhealthy, and the life of the officials posted on it must be trying in the extreme.

in check only by means of ships operating from a base, and that it would put an end to the beneficent naval activity of Russia if Ashurada were evacuated. As the Turkoman would have immediately recommenced their raids if the Russian ships had left, this argument would appear to have had weight.

The Turkoman were by no means disposed to acquiesce tamely in a new order which prevented their raids. In 1851 they surprised the island and killed or carried off its garrison. It was given out—possibly in order to "save face"—that these raiders had been assisted by Persia, and the Russian representative demanded the dismissal of the Shah's brother from the governorship of Mazanderan. This demand sorely tried the Amir-i-Nizam, who held it to be wholly unjustified, but after protesting strongly he wisely yielded to the Northern Power.

The Fall of the Amir-i-Nizam, 1851—Nasir-u-Din showed remarkable loyalty to his great Minister; but, as was only to be expected, the influence brought to bear, which pointed out his undoubted popularity among the soldiers, who knew that they owed their regular pay and clothing to him, at length aroused the fears of the Shah. Surrounding himself with his guards, he sent a messenger to his Minister to inform him that he was no longer Vizier, but only Commander of the army. This order was received with perfect submission, and *Mirza* Aga Khan, the Itimad-u-Dola, was appointed Sadr-i-Aazam. The fallen Amir-i-Nizam, but for ill-advised action on his behalf by the Russian Minister, who declared him protected by the Tsar and then withdrew from this position, might have weathered the storm. But this intervention and the intrigues of his enemies goaded the Shah to order him to retire to Kashan. There, watched by his devoted wife, he lived for two months, but it was then decided to execute him, and he was seized by a ruse. In the bath of the beautiful palace at Fin his veins were opened, and Persia's great Minister passed away. It is said that people have the rulers they deserve and, if so, Persia is to be sincerely pitied; for she is ruled, as Europe was in medieval times, by officials whose main desire is to amass wealth *per fas aut*

nefas. However this may be, the regrets which the traveller feels when visiting the charming gardens and pavilions of Fin are rendered more poignant when he reflects that, had this Minister governed for twenty years, he might have trained up some honest, capable men to succeed him. The death of the Amir-i-Nizam was, indeed, a calamity for Persia ; for it arrested the progress which had been so painfully achieved and, as the near future was to prove, it had an equally disastrous effect on her external relations.

The Herat Question, 1851–1853.—Yar Mohamed Khan, who had successfully maintained the independence of Herat against Persia and the Barakzais of Kabul and Kandahar, died in 1851. He was succeeded by his son, Said Mohamed, a dissolute and almost imbecile youth, who, in order to strengthen his position at home, where his incapacity had raised up a host of enemies, opened up negotiations with Persia. This action affected the British Government, and two years later a treaty was imposed on Persia by the terms of which that power "engaged not to send troops on any account to the territory of Herat, excepting when troops from without attack the place."[1] Although Persia agreed to sign this treaty, there is no doubt that it was unpalatable to the Shah and was not without its influence on the events which followed.

Russian Negotiations with Persia, 1853–1855.—In the autumn of 1853 Prince Dolgoruki made secret proposals to the Shah that Persia should co-operate with Russia against Turkey. This was to be effected in the first instance by collecting forces to threaten Erzeroum and Baghdad from Azerbaijan and Irak respectively, and then, if it appeared advisable, by declaring war and invading the Ottoman dominions from both these bases. It was agreed that, in the event of success, the territory seized by Persia should be either retained by that power or given back to Turkey upon payment. As a further inducement to accept this tempting offer, the Tsar promised, if war were declared, to remit the balance of the Turkomanchai indemnity ; and, if only a demonstration were made, the entire cost would

[1] *Aitchison's Treaties*, No. XVII. p. 71.

be deducted from the debt. The Shah swallowed the bait and accepted these proposals, but the Russian Minister had to reckon with the Sadr-i-Aazam. That astute individual pointed out that, if it was open to Persia to co-operate with Russia, it was equally open to join Turkey. He added that, if Great Britain and France intervened on her side, Persia might be able to sweep away the humiliating treaty of Turkomanchai and win back the lost provinces. The Shah was convinced by this reasoning, and, although orders had actually been issued for assembling forces in the provinces of Azerbaijan and Kermanshah, it was now decided to watch events and not to commit Persia definitely. This veering round on the part of the Shah deeply chagrined Prince Dolgoruki, who vented his wrath on the Sadr-i-Aazam. Nasir-u-Din made overtures to Great Britain and France, and was advised by those Powers, which had now joined in the Russo-Turkish war, to remain neutral. This counsel, which was most displeasing to its recipient and to the Court of Persia, caused the Sadr-i-Aazam to view the Russian proposals with less disfavour. Possibly he realized that it was dangerous to thwart Russia, and possibly also the lack of energy and vigour with which the war was waged by Great Britain, which did not make any use of her Indian army, influenced him in the same direction.

The Breach with Great Britain, 1855.—Persia was undoubtedly annoyed with Great Britain, but the trifling question which divided the two governments need not in itself have caused a rupture. It is not impossible that it was intentionally used for that purpose; but it is equally possible that the breach to which it led was not foreseen or intended by the Persian Government. In 1854 the British Legation had engaged as Persian Secretary a certain *Mirza* Hashim Khan, who had formerly been in Persian employment but had quitted the service some years before. The Sadr-i-Aazam objected to his holding the post, and this point was yielded, as it was obviously undesirable to employ as a go-between an individual who was disliked by the Persian Minister. When the Sadr-i-Aazam first expressed his wishes on the subject, he

suggested that *Mirza* Hashim might be sent to Shiraz as British Agent; but when this appointment was actually made he declared that, inasmuch as the man had never obtained a formal discharge from the service of the Persian Government, he was ineligible to hold any post under the British, and that his acceptance of the Agency would not be permitted. This objection was frivolous, for it is well known that in Persia formal discharges are unheard of, and the Sadr-i-Aazam added insult by arresting and detaining *Mirza* Hashim's wife. Mr. Murray, the newly-arrived Minister, agreed in the interests of peace that, if the *Mirza* were granted a slightly better paid post by the Persian Government, and if his safety were guaranteed and his wife restored to him, he would be discharged from the British service. Not only was this most reasonable proposal refused, but the unscrupulous Minister stated openly that the British representative had retained the *Mirza* simply on account of his wife. An offensive letter followed, in which a threat was made that, if the British flag were struck, there would be certain unpleasant revelations. The Minister finally broke off relations, and at the end of 1855 quitted Teheran. Weeks, and then months, passed without any communication from England. The Sadr-i-Aazam consequently began to think that he had triumphed over Mr. Murray, and in his somewhat premature exultation he resolved to gratify the national wish to obtain possession of Herat.

The Anglo-Afghan Alliance, 1855.—The threatening attitude of Persia towards Afghanistan caused Dost Mohamed to embrace cordially the idea of an alliance with Great Britain. Early in 1855 Sir John Lawrence concluded a treaty of perpetual peace and friendship[1] with the representative of our erstwhile enemy, thereby ending the twelve years of hostility and suspicion which the First Afghan War had bequeathed as a legacy.

The Change of Rulers at Herat, 1855.—Almost simultaneously with the conclusion of this treaty, the situation in the Herat province underwent a radical change. Said Mohamed, who was totally unfitted to rule, was deposed

[1] The text is given in Rawlinson's work, App. II.

by his subjects in favour of Mohamed Yusuf, a Sadozai, who in order to avenge the death of Kamran *Mirza* put his rival to death. Mohamed Yusuf, who had long resided in exile at Meshed, was rightly regarded as a Persian nominee. Dost Mohamed, who by the recent death of Kuhendil Khan had gained Kandahar, was most anxious for Great Britain to take action in defence of her interests at Herat, and when this step was deprecated as premature he proposed himself to attack the city with an Afghan army.

The Occupation of Herat by Persia, 1856.—Meanwhile, as already stated, Persia was recklessly bent on breaking the treaty of 1853, and in the spring of 1856 a Persian army marched on Herat, where it was welcomed by Mohamed Yusuf. Shortly afterwards there was a rising against the overbearing Persians, and Mohamed Yusuf hoisted the British flag and appealed for aid to Dost Mohamed. As the result of a second rising, however, Mohamed Yusuf was seized and sent a prisoner to the Persian camp. His deputy, Isa Khan, held the city for some months, but in October, 1856, the science of a French engineer, M. Buhler, brought about its fall, and Persian possession of Herat was at last made good.

The Second British Treaty with Dost Mohamed, 1857.—Action was then taken by Great Britain against Persia in two ways, one of which was indirect; for by a second treaty, concluded in January, 1857,[1] Dost Mohamed was granted a subsidy of a lac of rupees per month during the continuation of the war, on condition that the money was spent on his army. Muskets also were supplied to him in large numbers. Dost Mohamed, however, made no attack on Herat, and exercised little or no influence on the course of the war, which lasted for only a short period.

British Operations against Persia, 1856–1857.—The direct action was a declaration of war, most reluctantly made, by Great Britain against Persia. Few wars have resembled that which followed. The usual question is how to injure an enemy most effectively, but on this occasion the efforts

[1] The text is given in Rawlinson's work, App. III.

of our statesmen were directed to securing the evacuation of Herat without inflicting a heavy blow on Persia. Alternative schemes presented themselves to the British military authorities. The Indian army might march direct on Herat with a friendly and allied Afghan army. Another plan, more difficult to execute, was to march on Herat from Bandar Abbas. Both would have involved immense effort and cost. It was finally decided to operate in the Persian Gulf and at Mohamera, and in the first instance to occupy the island of Kharak, which was seized on the 4th of December. Five days later a force disembarked near Bushire. The old Dutch fort of Reshire was held staunchly by some Tangistanis, and four British officers were killed while storming it. Bushire was then bombarded and surrendered.[1]

In January, 1857, Sir James Outram assumed command and determined to attack a Persian force which was reported to be holding Borazjun, distant forty-six miles from Bushire in the direction of Shiraz. The strong British column found the formidable fort unoccupied, the enemy having fled panic-stricken without removing their munitions or camp equipage. Outram, being unprovided with transport, could not risk being entangled in the difficult defiles, and consequently, after blowing up the Persian magazine, began a night march back to Bushire. The Persian General, made aware of the retirement by the explosion of 40,000 lbs. of gunpowder, pursued the British force, which he overtook in the dark at Khushab and briskly attacked with artillery fire.[2] At dawn the British cavalry and artillery advanced. The execution done by the artillery shook the Persian army, and the 3rd Bombay Light Cavalry charged a regiment and rode through it, sabring the men. Outram fell from his horse and was stunned, and this accident caused some delay in the advance of the British infantry, so that the

[1] A Persian friend, now over eighty years of age, has described to me how he fled from Bushire in charge of his mother and sisters, and was robbed by fugitive Persian soldiers at Ahmadi, the first stage out of the town. His father, the *Karguzar*, or Foreign Office Agent, was taken to India, where he appears to have been well treated.

[2] The best account of this action is given by the late General (then Lieut.) Ballard in *Blackwood's Magazine* for 1861.

day was actually won by the cavalry and artillery. The Persians retreated in fair order and were not effectively pursued, owing to the smallness of the force of cavalry and its reckless and unnecessary use in the action. Had it been properly handled the defeat might have been converted into a rout.

The next operation was directed against Mohamera. In March the expeditionary force re-embarked and made for the Shatt-ul-Arab. Mohamera, which had been made over to the Persians by the treaty of Erzeroum,[1] had been strongly fortified with heavy batteries on both banks of the Karun. Outram's task was consequently difficult, and it appears to have been conducted with great skill. A mortar battery was prepared on a raft, and this was towed upstream by night to a point opposite the Persian battery on the right bank of the Karun, no attempt being made to prevent its passage. In the morning the fire from the steamers, aided by the mortar battery, silenced the forts, the transports were towed up into the Karun, and the troops were landed two miles above Mohamera. The Persians fled, leaving their guns, munitions, and camp behind them. Outram sent a flotilla up the Karun as far as Ahwaz, which was occupied, while the Persian army retreated. This concluded the operations.

The Conclusion of Peace, 1857.—The Persian Government had sued for peace directly after the capture of Bushire, and the treaty had actually been signed before the Karun expedition took place, but in the absence of telegraphic communication news of the signature did not reach Outram in time. By the terms of the treaty, concluded in Paris, the Shah agreed to evacuate Afghanistan and to recognize its independence. He furthermore agreed that, in case of future disputes between the two Powers, recourse should be made to the good offices of Great Britain before resort to arms. A suitable apology was tendered to the British Envoy ; and, as *Mirza* Hashim had already made his peace and all imputations against his wife had been withdrawn, the original cause of the breach of relations had disappeared. The Persians

[1] For this treaty *vide* Chapter LXXIX.



From a photograph by Lancelot Oliphant.

MOHAMERA FROM THE KARUN RIVER.

were amazed at British magnanimity in exacting no guarantee, no indemnity, and no concession; and the joy of the Sadr-i-Aazam at the absence of any demand for his dismissal may be imagined.[1]

From the British point of view relations with Persia became better after the war, which Persians seldom refer to with bitterness; and, as the Indian Mutiny broke out a few weeks later, it was fortunate that no British troops were locked up in Persia or Afghanistan.

The New Ruler of Herat.—The Persian Government, forewarned of the terms of the treaty, hastened to hand over Mohamed Yusuf to the relatives of Said Mohamed, by whom he was put to death. A Barakzai *Sirdar*, Sultan Ahmad Khan, a refugee nephew and son-in-law of Dost Mohamed, was appointed Governor of Herat upon agreeing to cause the *Khutba* to be read in the name of the Shah. The young *Sirdar* hastened to his principality, where he arrived before the Persian General, a prince of the blood, had heard of the new agreement. The latter, roused from his slumbers by the intrusion of the importunate Afghan, promptly ordered him to be seized and bastinadoed. After this favourite punishment had been inflicted, matters were duly explained and the *Sirdar* was seated on the Herat throne. Consequently, although Persia had been defeated, she was able both to keep the terms of the Treaty of Paris and yet to rule Herat through Sultan Ahmad Khan, who even visited Teheran and received a robe of honour from his gracious suzerain the Shah. It is difficult to understand why the British Government did not insist on the handing over of the province to Dost Mohamed, and it looks as if the astute Persian got the better of the British negotiator.

During this period of transition, a deputation of British officers from the Teheran mission was despatched to Herat; but the Afghan Prince was not satisfied with receiving "the moral support of England's recognition and sympathy" and little else. A Russian mission under

[1] It is not generally known that we owe the invention of khaki to this war, the Persian word signifying "of dust," and so "dust-coloured." It appears that some Persian troops dressed in this dust-coloured uniform were almost invisible at a distance, and the Indian authorities accordingly adopted it.

Khanikoff, in 1858, was not more successful. The Afghan remembered the punishment meted out to Dost Mohamed for receiving Vitkavich, and the Persian Government was by no means ready to see Russian influence predominant at Herat. Consequently, Khanikoff's mission was a decided failure.

The Assertion of Persian Authority on the Persian Gulf Littoral.—It has been stated in this work more than once that Persia has never been a sea-power. Nadir Shah, as mentioned in Chapter LXXII., made an effort to assert his authority in the Persian Gulf, but, conscious of the difficulty of garrisoning its ports, he granted the district of Bandar Abbas and the islands of Hormuz and Kishm to the *Shaykh* of the Bani Maani tribe, in return for an annual tribute. Towards the end of the eighteenth century a fighting ruler of Oman, Sultan bin Ahmad,[1] engaged in foreign conquests. Chahbar was first reduced, and then Kishm, Hormuz, Bahrein, and Bandar Abbas. In 1798 Sultan bin Ahmad received from the Persian Government a *farman*, by the terms of which, in return for an annual payment of tomans 6000, he farmed the Bandar Abbas district. In the same year an agreement was made by this ruler with the English, who were permitted not only to reopen their factory at Bandar Abbas, but to garrison it with 700 sepoys. About this period the British naval station of Basidu (Bassadore), on the island of Kishm, was founded with the sanction of the ruler of Maskat : it still remains British property, although not at present garrisoned.

In the middle of the nineteenth century the Persian Government decided to administer the ports directly, and during the absence of *Sayyid* Said of Maskat at Zanzibar expelled the Maskat Governor. An expedition from Maskat recaptured the ports ; but the Persians, having received large reinforcements, were too strong for *Sayyid* Said, who was hampered by a British interdict against movements of armed parties by sea. Finally, in 1856, peace was made, on the terms that the Imam of Maskat should farm the ports for twenty years on an increased

[1] *Vide* Badger's *Imams of Oman*, p. 226.

rental of tomans 16,000 and that Hormuz and Kishm were to be regarded as Persian territory. At the present time the only possession left to Maskat outside Oman is the little town of Gwadur, which is one of the ports of British Baluchistan.



NASIR-U-DIN SHAH.

CHAPTER LXXIX

THE ENVELOPMENT OF PERSIA

From Merv, last home of the free-lance, the clansmen are scattering far,
And the Turkmán horses are harnessed to the guns of the Russian Czar.
SIR ALFRED LYALL.

The Advance of Russia in Central Asia.—In the first half of the nineteenth century the most important events that affected Persia were the advance of Russia across the Caucasus and the annexation by that power, after two successful campaigns, of all the Persian provinces that lay to the north of the Aras. The latter half of the same century has witnessed a still greater advance of the northern power in Central Asia, ending in the marking out of a frontier line coterminous with that of Persia to the east of the Caspian Sea. I propose, therefore, to give some account of this extraordinary southern movement.[1]

The first Russian embassy to Khiva and Bokhara, conducted by Antony Jenkinson in the sixteenth century, has already been recorded in Chapter LXII. Early in the eighteenth century Peter the Great entered into relations with the Khanates of Khiva and Bokhara, and the ruler of the former state declared himself ready to accept Russian suzerainty in return for protection against Bokhara. In 1715 a column under Count Bekovich was

[1] The authorities consulted (in addition to works already mentioned) include *Narrative of a Journey from Herat to Khiva*, 1856, by Major James Abbott; *From Heraut to Ourenbourg*, by Capt. Sir R. Shakespear (*Blackwood's Magazine*, June, 1842); *A Ride to Khiva*, by Capt. F. Burnaby; *Life and Travels*, by Arminius Vambéry; *The Merv Oasis*, by E. O'Donovan; and *Eastern Persia*, by Sir F. Goldsmid.

despatched on an exploring expedition with the consent of the Khan, but his death changed the entire position, and the Russian expedition was attacked by his successor and annihilated. No steps were taken to retrieve this disaster. During the years which followed Russia gradually absorbed the Kirghiz, the "Middle Horde" submitting in 1702, and Orenburg was fortified as a base for subsequent operations. During the latter half of the eighteenth century the Russian advance was almost entirely stopped. In the nineteenth century Russia resumed her forward policy, and in 1822 she incorporated the "Little Horde" in the Orenburg government. The suspicions of Khiva and Bokhara were fully aroused by these acts.

The position of Russia in 1838–1839, just before the great advance began, was as follows. To the west of the Caspian Sea the Caucasus was still unsubdued, and more than one hundred thousand Russian soldiers were besieging what was aptly termed "the greatest fortress in the world." In Central Asia, with which we are more immediately concerned, the Russian boundary ran up the Ural River to Orenburg and thence to Troitzka. From this centre it was drawn to Petro-pavlovsk, and so on to Omsk and Semipalatinsk on the Chinese frontier.

The First Khivan Expedition, 1839–1840.—The first movement southwards was made against the state of Khiva. This expedition was undertaken partly as a reply to the British occupation of Afghanistan, but it was justified on other grounds. For many years the Uzbegs had constantly attacked Russian outposts, plundered the property of Russian subjects, and held a large number of Muscovites in slavery.

Count Perovski, the Governor of Orenburg, commanded a column consisting of 3000 infantry, 2000 Cossacks, and twenty-two guns. In November, 1839, he started off on the long march of some nine hundred miles. Every arrangement had been made to supply the troops with all necessaries, and, if anything, the transport column was too large. Exceptional cold killed off the camels by hundreds, the horses were unable to find food in the

snow, and Perovski was compelled by these adverse conditions to beat a retreat before even reaching the Ust-Urt plateau, situated between the Caspian and Aral Seas. He returned to Orenburg in June, 1840, after suffering heavy losses.

The expedition, although it ended in complete failure, alarmed Great Britain. With an initiative which is astonishing, Major D'Arcy Todd, who was at the time on his mission at Herat, despatched Captain James Abbott, and afterwards Captain Shakespear, across a desert seven hundred miles wide to explain to the Khan the danger of flouting Russia. The mission of Shakespear was remarkably successful; for he not only induced the Khan to release all Russian slaves, but himself conducted the liberated captives, numbering four hundred men, women, and children, to Orenburg, a very notable feat.

In the autumn of 1840 a second expedition was being organized against Khiva by Russia, but was rendered unnecessary by the submission of the Uzbeg chief. Finally, in 1842, Russia concluded a treaty with him, by the terms of which slave-dealing was to be abolished in Khiva and inroads on Russian territory were to be prevented.

The Russian Advance to the Sea of Aral, 1847.—In the succeeding decade Russia set to work gradually and systematically to occupy the great Kirghiz desert from the Ural River to the Sea of Aral. In 1847 she reached the mouth of the Sir Darya. A fort was erected at this point and a second in a harbour of the Sea of Aral, from which that important sheet of water was surveyed.

The Occupation of the Valley of the Sir Darya, 1849–1864.—By her occupation of the mouth of the Sir Darya Russia was brought into contact with the Khanate of Khokand, whose hostility was aroused by the Muscovite invasion of her territory. In 1849 one of the forts of this little state was captured. Four years later a further advance was made: Ak Masjid, two hundred and twenty miles up the river, was taken, Fort Perovski was founded on its ruins, and the line of the Sir Darya was established. The Crimean War broke out shortly afterwards, and Russia made no forward step for some years, but de-

voted her energies to making good against Khokand the positions she had gained.

In 1860 the Khan of Khokand attacked the Russian position in Semirechia, which province had been occupied six years before. The Russians replied by proceeding against Tashkent, which was captured in 1864. In the following year the territory between the Aral Sea and the Issik Kul lake was formed into the frontier province of Turkestan. This marked the completion of the first stage in the great advance.

Russian Relations with Bokhara, 1842–1868.—In 1842 the Amir of Bokhara, alarmed at the occupation of Kabul by Great Britain, had appealed to Russia. That Power despatched a mission under Colonel Butenef, which was at first received with the highest honours. But the Kabul catastrophe reacted on the situation at Bokhara, where Stoddart and later Conolly, who had joined him, were imprisoned; and the Russian envoy, who had done his best to save Stoddart, was dismissed with studied discourtesy by the Amir, who no longer feared the English.

More than twenty years later, in 1865, the Amir of Bokhara took the offensive against the great northern Power by occupying Khojent, and imprisoned four Russian envoys who were found in the city. In the following year the Russians, after a decisive victory over the Bokharans at Irgai, reoccupied Khojent. In 1868 the Bokharan army was again defeated and Samarcand was occupied. Shortly afterwards peace was made with the Amir, who ceded Samarcand and paid a war indemnity.

The annexation, in 1876, of the entire Khanate of Khokand rounded off the conquests of Russia in the eastern sphere of operations, and by establishing her at Charjui on the Oxus made her a neighbour of Persia and increased her influence at Teheran. These campaigns may be looked upon as constituting the second stage of the advance.

The Conquest of Khiva, 1873.—The third stage was the conquest of Khiva. In 1869 the Russians established themselves at Krasnovodsk, to-day the starting-point of the Central Asian Railway, and shortly afterwards at

Chikishliar, near the mouth of the River Atrek. Strong protests were made by Persia, but in vain. The new-comers gradually extended their authority over the neighbouring Yamut Turkoman and surveyed the routes to the interior. The avowed object of Russia was to open up a direct route into Central Asia, a policy undertaken no doubt partly in the interests of the province of Turkestan.

The activity of the Russian pioneers naturally caused widespread uneasiness. The Khan of Khiva felt that the demand made on him to co-operate in opening up communications with the Sea of Aral across his territory menaced his independence. A campaign against Khiva had been decided upon in principle for some time; it was, indeed, forced on Russia by Khivan support of the Kirghiz rising. In 1873 three columns advanced simultaneously from Krasnovodsk, from Perovski, and from Orenburg. Two of these[1] reached the great oasis safely, encountering no resistance, and Russia annexed the land on the right bank of the Amu Darya, where she constructed two forts. The young Khan was reinstated on the throne, but a crushing war indemnity of nearly a quarter of a million sterling was imposed.

Persian Campaigns against the Turkoman, 1857–1860.—Before we come to the final phase of the Russian advance, we must turn for a moment to the relations existing between Persia and the Turkoman at this period. In 1857 Sultan Murad *Mirza*, Governor-General of Khorasan, invited eighty Turkoman to a conference at Meshed, where they were treacherously seized and imprisoned. Having by this act weakened the man-stealers, the Persian Governor-General marched on Merv, which he occupied as the result of a victory. Three years later he was succeeded by Hamza *Mirza*, who occupied Merv a second time without opposition, but was defeated in an attempt on the entrenched camp of the Tekke close by. His army fled in complete disorder, leaving its guns to

[1] The Krasnovodsk column was forced to retreat from lack of water, after burying its guns in the sand. Burnaby comments on the fact that no use was made of water transport, although steamers had penetrated as far as Kungrad on the Amu Darya to the north of the Khivan oasis.

the victorious Turkoman;[1] and slaves in Central Asia became cheaper than they had been for a generation.[2] No sustained effort was made to restore Persia's lost prestige, but some of the guns were recovered in a raid from Sarakhs, which was retained as a Persian frontier fort.

The Crushing of the Turkoman by Russia, 1881.—We return now to the Russian advance. After the subjugation of Khiva the only independent area left in Central Asia was that of the Turkoman, over which, as we have seen, Persia exercised vague and ineffectual control. Every year from Chikishliar the Russians despatched strong columns into the interior, and gradually they annexed the right bank of the Atrek as far as Chat.[3] They also began to control the Yamut tribe.

In 1877 General Lomakin advanced on Kizil Arvat, but retreated before making good his position. Two years later he advanced to Geok Teppe, or "Blue Hill," the famous entrenched camp of the Tekke. His artillery caused terrible losses among the Turkoman, who were crowded into a small area, but his assault failed and he retreated with heavy losses. The shock to Russian prestige was terrible, and the event may perhaps be compared with the British retreat from Kabul.

General Skobeleff was now entrusted with the task of rehabilitating Russia's lowered reputation. Realizing that the question of transport was of primary importance, he decided, as did Lord Kitchener later when faced with a similar problem, to construct a railway across the level steppe. With its aid,[4] joined to his own powers of organization, he was able to bring 8000 men with fifty-two guns and eleven machine-guns against Geok Teppe,[5] where the Turkoman had decided to make their last stand. In January, 1881, in spite of the desperate sorties of the Tekke, parallels were dug and a breach was made, through which a deadly fire was poured into the confined area.

[1] *Vide Merv Oasis*, ii. 170.

[2] Vambéry in his *Life and Travels* gives the average price of a slave at Bokhara at £3, but mentions that the price went down to five shillings after the Persian disaster.

[3] *Merv Oasis*, chap. iii.; also *Ten Thousand Miles, etc.*, p. 16.

[4] Only a few miles were actually constructed by 1881.

[5] Dangil Teppe is the actual name; *vide The Heart of Asia*, p. 291.

The final assault was entirely successful. The signal was given by the explosion of a mine, which levelled a large section of the wall, and the Russians, advancing in several columns, quickly captured the fortress. The pursuit of the fugitives, seen by O'Donovan from the neighbouring hills, turned the flight of the Turkoman into a rout. Thus fell the last great stronghold of Central Asia. Many years after this victory, as I wandered among the ruins of the fort, while ready to pay due homage to the assailants' valour, I marvelled at the desperate courage with which this simple walled enclosure had been held for more than twenty days against the Russian army. For the Tekke Turkoman the blow was crushing and final. The Tekke of Merv were persuaded to submit by Alikhanoff, a Russian officer who by birth was a Moslem of Daghestan; and in 1884 Merv became a part of the Russian Empire. The Sariks of Yulatan, the oasis to the south, followed suit, as did other minor tribes also. This successful campaign constituted the fourth and last stage of the Russian advance.

The Effect on Persia.—The effect on Persia was twofold. That power has been unable to repress the constant raiding of Khorasan by the Tekke, Yamut, and Goklan,[1] and consequently the action of Russia was an inestimable benefit to the harassed peasantry. Against this must be set the hemming-in of Persia to the north and the loss of her prestige through the Russian annexation of Merv. The new frontier, too, which ran up the River Atrek as far as Chat and thence up the Sambar, was drawn most unfavourably for Persia in its eastern section. All the fertile *atek*, or skirt, of the range was annexed by the Russians, and the Persian villagers of the uplands were not permitted to increase the extent of their irrigated land by a square yard or to plant a new tree. To-day Russian officials cross the Persian frontier at will and punish any contravention of the treaty by the destruction of crops and in other ways.

The Capture of Herat by Dost Mohamed, 1863.—We

[1] Unfortunately, of recent years the Turkoman who inhabit the Gurgan Valley have recommenced their murderous raids.



From a photograph by Major J. W. Watson.

MOHAMED GELDI KHAN, CHIEF OF THE GOKLAN TURKOMAN, AND WOMEN.

464a

must now turn for a while to the affairs of Afghanistan. Sultan Ahmad Khan, after being secured in his government, protested strongly against the occupation of Farrah by Dost Mohamed Khan, which had been effected in 1856. Great Britain declined to interfere, and in 1862 the Herat ruler took advantage of disturbances at Kabul to expel the Afghan garrison. Dost Mohamed almost immediately took the field and after recovering Farrah marched on Herat. In May, 1863, he effected its capture without great difficulty.

Sultan Ahmad had died during the last weeks of the siege and Dost Mohamed survived his triumph only a few days. The Persian Government had viewed the presence of the Amir on the borders of Khorasan with concern and were dismayed at the fall of Herat ; but with the death of Dost Mohamed the menace passed away. At the same time, in Afghanistan as in Central Asia, the political situation had changed to the distinct disadvantage of the Shah.

The Makran Boundary Commission, 1870–1871.—We must now turn to the advance of the Indian Empire. In the first half of the eighteenth century Baluchistan had been constituted a province of Persia by Nadir Shah, and in 1739 Nasir Khan Brahui was appointed *Beglerbegi*, or Governor. Upon the assassination of the Great Afshar, Nasir Khan at first acknowledged the suzerainty of Ahmad Shah, but later on asserted his independence. After his death, in 1795, Baluchistan reverted to chronic anarchy, being divided among a number of chiefs who raided Persia and fought among themselves. Under Mohamed Shah Persia began to reassert her claims, and through the instrumentality of Ibrahim Khan of Bam district after district was annexed. In 1864 Sir Frederic Goldsmid, who was the first Director of Telegraphs in Persia, found that west of Gwadur there was no settled authority to deal with ; and it speaks highly for his capacity and tact that the telegraph line was ever completed and worked. It thus appeared desirable, not only from the point of view of telegraph construction and maintenance, but equally in the interests of the protected

state of Kalat, and lastly of Persia itself, to fix a definite boundary, and negotiations were opened with this object. These culminated in an agreement for a joint commission by Great Britain, Persia, and Kalat; but owing to the persistent obstructiveness of the Persian Commissioner and the hostility of Ibrahim Khan, little or no progress was made. General Goldsmid ultimately marched to Gwadur, where he was joined by Major Lovett, who had made a survey of the proposed frontier line, and was able to complete the information previously collected. The British Commissioner then gave his decision, delimiting the boundary from a point east of Guattar (which must not be confused with Gwadur) up to Kuhak. After some demur the Shah accepted this line, which was favourable to Persian claims; and General Goldsmid was encouraged by the signal compliment to attempt a still more difficult task.

The Sistan Question. The First Phase, 1863–1870.—One of the most important questions which confronted the British Government after the signature of the Treaty of Paris was that of Sistan. This delta province was originally Persian, but it was annexed by Ahmad Shah and formed part of his successor's empire. In the internal struggles for power which subsequently distracted Afghanistan it became attached alternately to Kandahar and Herat, Yar Mohamed Khan holding it tributary during most of his lifetime. After his death the Government of the Shah began to make good its claims on its lost provinces. Ali Khan, the chief of the Sarbandi,[1] gave his adherence to Persia, and was honoured with the hand of a Persian princess in marriage. This occurred about 1857, and during the reign of Dost Mohamed both Ali Khan and his successor, Taj Mohamed, acknowledged the supremacy of Persia. The Shah, during the years 1861–63, repeatedly invited the British Government to intervene to protect Sistan against Afghan aggression. The answer he received was that, as the British Government did not recognize the

[1] The Sarbandis were ancient inhabitants of Sistan. Carried off to Burujird by Tamerlane, they were brought back by Nadir Shah.



From a photograph by H. R. Sykes.

WEAVING AT NEH (CLOSE TO SISTAN).

466a

sovereignty of the Shah in Sistan, it could not interfere. Strictly, the case was one in which the recently signed treaty might have been invoked; but, as the Government of India had not at this time acknowledged Shir Ali Khan, who was fighting to establish himself at Kabul, arbitration was out of the question. Being pressed to give a definite answer as to its intentions, the Foreign Office in 1863 wrote that "Her Majesty's Government, being informed that the title to the territory of Sistan is disputed between Persia and Afghanistan, must decline to interfere in the matter, and must leave it to both parties to make good their possession by force of arms."

This declaration of policy favoured Persia, as Shir Ali at the time was unable to defend Afghan frontier interests. The Government of the Shah, on the other hand, secure from British remonstrances, continued steadily to pursue its policy of establishing Persian influence and power until all the Persian inhabitants of Sistan had been brought under the control of Teheran. But Shir Ali, having at length succeeded in establishing himself firmly upon the throne of Kabul, threatened to go to war with Persia. Upon this the British Government, forsaking the policy of masterly inactivity, proposed arbitration under the sixth article of the Treaty of Paris, and this offer was accepted.

The Sistan Arbitration Commission, 1872.—After his success in securing the ratification of the Makran boundary, Sir Frederic Goldsmid was instructed to proceed to Sistan and there adjudicate on Persian and Afghan claims. The British Mission started from Bandar Abbas and in Sistan was joined by General Pollock, who represented Lord Mayo, Governor-General of India, and by Dr. Bellew, the well-known orientalist.

The Amir of Kain, Mir Alum Khan, and the Persian Commissioner both treated the Mission with marked hostility and made it abundantly clear that it is a mistake not to provide an escort of British troops on such occasions. General Goldsmid, whose forbearance was extraordinary, made such surveys and enquiries as were possible, and then, as in the case of the former Boundary Commission, returned to Teheran.

In his award he distinguished between Sistan proper and outer Sistan. The former he defined as running from the *nayzar*, or reed beds, on the north to the main canal on the south, the district being bounded at that period by the Helmand on the east. This area, estimated at nine hundred and fifty square miles, with a population of 45,000, was awarded to Persia. Outer Sistan, or the district on the right bank of the Helmand, was awarded to Afghanistan.

From the point where the main canal started, at the great dam known as the *Band-i-Sistan*, the frontier was declared to run in a direct line to Kuh-i-Malik-i-Sia, the spot—at that time unvisited—where both Persia and Afghanistan now touch the Indian Empire. This decision was undoubtedly favourable to Persia and granted her all she could reasonably claim. Shir Ali, on the other hand, gained no part of the most fertile tract, Afghan Sistan being relatively barren and unpopulated. But, as Rawlinson put it, "Sistan, in fact, was Persian territory, which had been irregularly attached at different periods to Herat and Kandahar." Given this fact and given the recent exertions of Persia, the award, however unpalatable to Shir Ali, was just.

The Perso-Baluch Boundary Commission, 1896.—Sir Frederic Goldsmid had thus delimited first the boundary from Guattar, the port on the Arabian Sea, to Kuhak, and later that from Sistan to Kuh-i-Malik-i-Sia. Between these two points lay an area, three hundred miles in length, which was mostly desert, but contained some debatable date groves claimed both by Persia and by Kharan, a desert province of British Baluchistan. Owing mainly to the existence of these, a Boundary Commission was constituted in 1896 under Colonel (now Sir Thomas) Holdich, on which I had the honour to serve.[1] Kuhak had been seized, upon the departure of General Goldsmid, by the active Ibrahim Khan, but the British Government had never recognized it as belonging to Persia. By the award of the Commission it became a Persian possession, while the southern Mashkel date groves, including

[1] *Ten Thousand Miles, etc.*, chap. xix.



From a photograph by H. R. Sykes.

RAFTS ON THE SISTAN LAKE.

4682

Ladgasht, were given to Kharan. A few other date groves farther north, including those of Muksotag, were awarded to Persia.

As the cool season—in which alone surveying is possible—was nearly over before the Commission started work, Colonel Holdich decided to make the ranges running down from Kuh-i-Malik-i-Sia, known as Kacha Kuh and Kuh-i-Mirjawa, the boundary in the northern section of the area. Any other arrangement would have involved a second season's work, which would have been very difficult to arrange. By this settlement the definition of the Persian frontier was completed from the port of Guattar to Sistan, and, as the disputed Hashtadan Plain in Khorasan had been delimited by General Maclean in 1891, the only gap which remains to-day is from the south of the Hashtadan boundary pillars to Sistan, a distance of perhaps two hundred miles.

The Second Sistan Arbitration Commission, 1903–1905.—In 1891 the Helmand began to change its course, and when I founded the Sistan Consulate in 1899 the main channel of the river, termed the Rud-i-Perian or "River of the Fairies," flowed considerably west of the channel which General Goldsmid had accepted as the boundary. This change necessitated the despatch of a second Arbitration Commission, under Colonel (now Sir Henry) McMahon. On this occasion the British representative was accompanied by a strong escort, which placed him in a very different position from that of Sir Frederic Goldsmid. The intricate question was carefully and exhaustively studied under the most trying extremes of heat and cold, and incidentally considerable additions were made to our knowledge of the geography of this corner of Asia. By the award the boundary was made to run as before from Kuh-i-Malik-i-Sia to the *Band-i-Sistan*, the chief dam, and thence along the Helmand to the point at which the two branches were formed. It followed the Nad Ali channel as before, but the line, which ran approximately north in this section, was laid down with greater precision than had been possible in the case of the first Commission.

The Perso-Turkish Boundary.—In the west alone have

the boundaries of Persia remained practically unchanged during the last century. In 1843 a Mixed Commission, including representatives of Great Britain and Russia, was appointed to adjudicate upon the Perso-Turkish boundary, which, owing to the population of shifting nomads and the hilly nature of the country, was a complicated matter to settle. This Commission led in 1847 to the Treaty of Erzeroum, by the terms of which each of the neighbouring powers abandoned some territory to which it laid claim and agreed to appoint commissioners to define the frontier. The new Commission met in 1849, 1850, and 1851 at Mohamera and Baghdad, but without arriving at any definite result. In 1851 Lord Palmerston suggested that the general line of frontier should be traced at Constantinople, in conformity with the Treaty of Erzeroum, by the agents of Persia and Turkey, with the assistance of the commissioners, doubtful localities being left for future settlement. This suggestion was agreed to, and survey operations were conducted during a period of eight years (from 1857 to 1865), as the result of which a map was made of the country between Ararat and the Persian Gulf, a tract seven hundred miles long and from twenty to forty miles wide. The Porte was then informed that "in the opinion of the mediating powers the future line of boundary between the dominions of the Sultan and the Shah was to be found within the limits traced on the map, and that the two Mohamedan Governments should themselves mark out the line, and that in the event of any differences between them in regard to any particular locality, the points in dispute should be referred to the decision of the Governments of England and Russia."

In 1907 Turkey, taking advantage of Persian internal troubles, occupied not only "doubtful localities," but also what was without question Persian territory. Some years later, however, a Mixed Commission was once again constituted, and in October 1914, a day before the outbreak of hostilities between Russia and Turkey, the last boundary pillar erected at the foot of Mount Ararat completed the demarcation of the Turko-Persian frontier.

Summary.—In this chapter we have traced the envelopment of Persia from the north and from the east. The Great Northern Power, urged on by the irresistible forces which ever drive an organized state to expand at the expense of unorganized neighbours unable, and often unwilling, even to restrain their subjects from raiding, has advanced in four great strides from Orenburg to the Persian frontier. In its progress it has absorbed the valley of the Sir Darya, Bokhara and Samarcand, Khiva, and finally the country of the Turkoman, which now constitutes the province of Transcaspia, with its capital at Askabad. Russia has firmly established her power in this vast sparsely populated steppe territory and has riveted her yoke by means of the Central Asian railway in the first place, and more recently, in 1905, by the line which joins Tashkent to Orenburg. Other railways are being projected. I have travelled in Central Asia on more than one occasion and can testify to the steady progress visible on every side, which contrasts most favourably with the lack of security, of order, and of justice characteristic of the native regimes described by the ready pen of Vambéry.

This advance of Russia has been the subject of bitter criticism in England; but the critics, many of whom are badly informed, do not appear to realize that during the same period Great Britain has annexed great, fertile, well-populated provinces in India. Outside India, too, the huge desert province now known as British Baluchistan has been annexed, and the foreign relations of Afghanistan are at the present day controlled by the Government of India. On the western frontier alone there has been no important change to record, and the exact boundary between the Persian and Turkish empires has been laid down by a Commission on which representatives of Great Britain and Russia are serving.

The Signature of Nasir-u-Din Shah Kajar.
(Through the courtesy of Messrs. Tussauds.)

CHAPTER LXXX

THE AWAKENING OF PERSIA

The stream of renovation flows quickly towards the East.—Jamal-u-din.

The Question of Telegraphic Communication between England and India.—In the preceding chapter it has been shown by what process the boundaries of Persia have been fixed as they are to-day. In the present some account is given of the steps Persia has taken towards the utilization of the material and commercial advantages of Europe.

One great difference between the progressive West and the unprogressive East lies in the nature of their communications. In Persia, as explained in Chapter II., little improvement can be recorded since the days of Cyrus the Great, so far as the Persians themselves are responsible. Fortunately, however, Persia lies on the highway of the nations, and owing to her advantageous position has become the recipient of a splendid service of telegraph lines.

Before we deal with these, it is desirable to glance at the larger question of telegraphic communication between England and India, of which the Persian lines formed a part. During the Indian Mutiny the need for direct telegraphic communication was seriously felt in England, and in 1859 an attempt was made to lay a cable down the Red Sea in correspondence with wires which stretched from Marseilles to Alexandria. This attempt entirely failed.

At that period Turkey had realized the advantage of the telegraph for the control of her widespreading

empire. For her own ends she decided to construct a line from Constantinople across Asia Minor to Baghdad. It was proposed that it should be continued thence to India by the British Government; and, in view of the failure in the Red Sea, this scheme was gladly adopted. Some years were consumed in negotiations and surveys, but in 1863 the Overland Telegraph Convention was concluded at Constantinople. Owing to the feeble control exercised by Turkey over the tribes to the south of Baghdad and the malarious climate (although these obstacles proved to be less serious than had been anticipated), it was decided to provide an alternative line through Persia to connect at Bushire with the cable to be laid down the Persian Gulf.

The First Telegraph Line in Persia, 1864.—Accordingly, negotiations were opened with the Shah for the construction by British officers of a circuitous line running from the Persian frontier near Baghdad to Kermanshah, Hamadan, and Teheran, and from the capital to Bushire. At first the proposal met with strenuous resistance from the reactionary party, but the Shah determined to benefit by the scheme, and by the end of 1864 the first single-wire line was constructed. The obstacles to be overcome were great, consisting in depredations by the tribes and ignorant obstruction by the Persian local officials; but the British officers and non-commissioned officers were a splendid body of men, and thanks to their tact and capacity the original concession was repeatedly modified and important developments were made.

The Indo-European Telegraph Lines.—In 1870 a through double line was constructed by Messrs. Siemens Brothers from London to Teheran, running across Germany and Russia to Tabriz, and joining the already existing line at Teheran. The lines worked by the Indo-European Telegraph Company, as it was termed, completed direct communication between London and India, Bushire being connected by submarine cable with Jask; and from that station with Karachi both by a land line and by cable.

In 1872 a third convention was concluded, by the terms of which three wires were provided, two for international and one for local use. There were no important changes until, in 1898, it was decided to construct a direct land line across South-Eastern Persia to Karachi. In that year I was proceeding from Shiraz to found the Sistan Consulate. At Isfahan I was overtaken by Mr. King Wood, who was instructed to make a survey for this line, and we travelled together to Sistan. Mr. King Wood subsequently constructed the Central Persia Telegraph Line, as it was called, as far as the British frontier. In his case the Persian officials were friendly, but the natural difficulties were greater, as the Lut had to be crossed. In spite of this, the line was successfully constructed, and constitutes another monument to British enterprise.

Their Influence on Persia.—Apart from the great trunk systems, Persia now possesses other lines, managed by the Minister of Telegraphs, who has an English adviser. She receives an annual royalty, and is paid for all local and foreign messages. But beyond these material advantages there are still greater benefits. Before the boon of electric communication was conferred there was little effective control over the distant provinces, and much of the history of Persia consists of revolts headed by pretenders or turbulent chiefs. All this was changed by the construction of lines enabling news of local events to reach the Government daily. Moreover, the wires are popularly supposed to end at the foot of the throne in the royal palace, and on this account telegraph offices have become *bast*, or sanctuary, and thus provide a defence against oppression. Apart from this, Persia, formerly an isolated kingdom, has gradually entered into the comity of nations ; and not only has her prestige been enhanced thereby, but ideas of progress and reform have gradually filtered in from outside and taken root, even though sometimes the soil was stony.

The part played by British officials has been remarkable. The late *Mukbar-u-Dola*, who was the first Minister of Telegraphs and held the post for more than

a generation, informed me that his respect for British officers was profound, and that he had invariably found them ideal colleagues ; and he added that he had long since ceased to check their statements. Throughout Persia the English officials, who lead lonely lives with few amenities, are a power for good, and it is impossible to exaggerate the services rendered by them to the Persian Government in cases in which accurate information is of great value. Equally important assistance is sometimes given by conveying messages from the Persian Government to rebellious tribes.

The Cossack Brigade.—In previous chapters reference has been made to the military missions of Great Britain and France, which attempted to turn the Persian army into an efficient fighting machine. After the retirement of the English military mission in the reign of Mohamed Shah, French officers again appeared on the scene, to be followed later by Italian and again by French officers. In 1878, Great Britain having meanwhile refused her aid, an Austrian mission was engaged, but it effected little progress and its officers gradually retired. The Russians also took up the task, and simultaneously with the appearance of the Austrian mission a regiment was organized on the Cossack model. One thousand Berdan rifles and some guns were presented by the Tsar, and, thanks to Russian support and the capacity shown by the Russian officers, this regiment has expanded into a brigade, which with its complement of guns represents the most efficient unit of the Persian army.

The Reuter Concession, 1872.—In 1871 the Shah appointed his representative at Constantinople to the post of *Sadr-i-Aazam*, an office which had not recently been filled. *Mirza* Husayn Khan, the new Grand Vizier, believed sincerely that the salvation of Persia lay in fulfilling all treaty obligations towards Russia, while confiding the regeneration of the country to Great Britain. In pursuance of this policy, it was determined to create a gigantic monopoly, through which were to be effected the construction of railways, the working of mines, and the establishment of a national bank. In

return, the Customs and, indeed, almost all the resources of the Empire were to be pledged. This concession was granted to Baron Julius de Reuter, a naturalized British subject, whose scheme involved the floating of several companies to work the vast enterprise.

With a naïve ignorance of European politics, the Shah started at this juncture on his first European tour, and he was surprised and disappointed to find that strong indignation prevailed in the highest quarters at Petrograd against this extraordinary concession. In England His Majesty was equally disappointed to find apathy on the subject where he had expected to find enthusiasm. The feeling of Persia was also entirely against the surrender to Europeans of such far-reaching control, and on this occasion public opinion was entirely sound. Consequently, upon the Shah's return to Teheran, the concession was annulled.

The Opening of the Karun, 1888.—Among the concessions granted by Nasir-u-Din was one by which the lower Karun was opened to commerce.[1] This was greeted with enthusiasm in the British Press; but when it is understood that the stretch of river actually opened was only one hundred and seventeen miles in length, equivalent to rather less than eighty miles by land, the small importance of the concession that had been gained becomes apparent. Nor did the special regulations fail to lessen the value of what the Shah had reluctantly conceded. By the Treaty of Turkomanchai Europeans are allowed "des maisons pour les habiter, et des magasins pour y déposer leurs marchandises." But by the retrograde "Karun Regulations" we learn that "il est formellement interdit de construire, sur les rives de la Karoun, des bâtiments tels que entrepôts de charbon ou de marchandise, boutiques, caravansérails, ateliers, etc." It is thus evident that the Shah was ill-advised, and wished to take away with one hand what he had conceded with the other.

Much credit is due to Messrs. Lynch Brothers for undertaking to act as pioneers under such unfavourable conditions. Not only was the Persian Government

[1] *Vide* Curzon's *Persia*, chap. xxv. and *Ten Thousand Miles, etc.*, chaps. xxi. and xxii.



H.I.M. NASIR-U-DIN.

(Through the courtesy of H.E. the Persian Minister.)

jealous of British commerce penetrating a country which it could only benefit, but the hereditary chief of the Kab Arabs, whose influence was paramount from Mohamera to Wais, a village above Ahwaz, was bitterly hostile, as the opening of the river had been followed by the posting of garrisons at Mohamera and Ahwaz and by the advent of several Persian officials.

The crux of the Karun question is the natural barrage at Ahwaz, which cannot be passed by steamers during most of the year. Above it the distance to Shuster is eighty miles by river and sixty miles by land. This insignificant stretch of waterway was thought by the Shah to possess vast potentialities, and was reserved for exploitation by Persian subjects. In return for privileges they were expected to pay large sums into the imperial privy purse. Messrs. Lynch, whose knowledge of Persia was considerable, were able to surmount this thorny obstacle by presenting a steamer to the Shah, which as the agents of His Majesty they worked between Ahwaz and Shuster at an annual loss.

Since I visited the Karun Valley eighteen years ago much progress can be recorded. The working of the important petroleum deposits at the foot of the Bakhtiari ranges has brought considerable sums of money and a progressive British community to the spot; the local chiefs, too, have been given a pecuniary interest in the company. Again, the opening up of the Ahwaz-Isfahan road by the initiative of Messrs. Lynch has created a large through traffic. Gradually jealousy has been disarmed, as it has become evident that the district has benefited enormously by the new order, and the recent history of the Karun Valley adds yet another pacific triumph to the long list already won by the officials and merchants of Great Britain.

The Imperial Bank of Persia, 1889.—Baron de Reuter had hitherto received no compensation for the annulment of his wide concession. Indeed, his caution-money, amounting to £40,000, was retained. In 1889 the Shah, in partial amends for this hard dealing, signed a concession in his favour for the foundation of a bank, to be called the

Imperial Bank of Persia. This British enterprise was started with a capital of one million sterling[1] and with the right to issue bank-notes. It was also granted the exploitation of the mineral resources of Persia, with the exception of precious stones, gold, and silver.[2] At first the managers of the institution bought their experience somewhat dearly; and the sudden and apparently permanent depreciation of silver constituted a heavy loss. But to-day, after carrying on operations for a quarter of a century, the position of the Bank is fully recognized; and it can claim to have become a Persian institution of special value both to the Government and to merchants.

The Tobacco Régie, 1890–1892.—Less fortunate than the Imperial Bank of Persia was the fate of the Tobacco Régie. This ill-judged concession gave full control over the production, sale, and export of all tobacco in Persia. In return for these rights a sum of £15,000 was to be paid annually to the Shah; in addition, after the working expenses and 5 per cent had been set aside, His Majesty was to receive one quarter of the profits. The concession affected the position of tobacco-growers, sellers, and smokers alike; and in Persia both men and women smoke regularly. Its gross unfairness was aggravated by the fact that many of the employés were drawn from a somewhat low class and by the lack of tact displayed in dealing with Persian rights. In short, first public indignation and then fanaticism was aroused. *Haji Mirza* Hasan Shirazi, the leading divine, placed an interdict on smoking, and the order was obeyed throughout the land, the royal palace being no exception. Finally, after disturbances had broken out and intense hostility had been displayed towards Europeans, the Shah cancelled the concession and agreed to pay compensation.

The Assassination of Nasir-u-Din, 1896.—By Moslem calculation Nasir-u-Din had reigned for fifty years in 1896. Preparations were being made to celebrate the

[1] On the constitution of the Bank, de Reuter recovered his caution-money; he also received a premium of £2 per share when the capital was issued. I have to thank Mr. G. Newell, Chief Manager of the Bank, for the above information.

[2] The mining rights were sold to the Persian Bank Mining Rights Corporation in 1890, which proved a failure.

auspicious event when suddenly an assassin, taking advantage of the Shah's kindly custom of receiving petitions in person, fired at him and killed him. Thus died Nasir-u-Din Shah, who was rightly regarded by his subjects as the ablest man in his dominions. Splendidly virile and of striking appearance, he conducted all important affairs in person. In 1894 I was accorded an interview by His Majesty, who for nearly an hour asked me question after question about my recent journey in Baluchistan. He was much surprised to learn that there was a semi-active volcano in this province, and was inclined to doubt the accuracy of my statement until I assured him that I had extracted sulphur and sal-ammoniac from the smoking crater. He then said, "I have to thank you for this piece of news, which adds to the greatness of Persia and which proves once more that English officers give me information of greater value than any of my own officials."

In illustration of the Shah's humour the following story may perhaps be of interest. His Majesty once visited the famous *Tak-i-Kisra*, and while standing amid the ruins of this Sasanian palace asked his courtiers whether they deemed him or Noshirwan the juster monarch. The astute Persians were at a complete loss, as, if they said that their monarch exceeded Noshirwan in the virtue for which his renown is world-wide, the Shah might look upon them as flatterers, whereas a reply in the opposite sense might be badly received. Consequently they bowed obsequiously and kept silent. After a long pause the musing Shah said : "I will myself reply to my own question. I am more just than Noshirwan." The courtiers, whose relief was intense, broke out into loud exclamations of "May we be thy sacrifice!" The Shah, whose mood was caustic, again spoke and said : "You have applauded my statement without waiting for my reasons, which is foolish. I will now give you my reasons. Noshirwan had his famous Vizier, Buzurgmihr, and whenever the monarch quitted the path of justice he was brought back to it by his remonstrances. I have only *you*, who ever try to force me out of the straight

path, but in spite of you I am justice personified. Thus I am more just than Noshirwan."

At the present day there is a tendency, more especially among the "Young Persians," to disparage Nasir-u-Din, and the fact is adduced that he discouraged the sending of boys to school in Europe. But it is certain that the Shah was far ahead of his people, and although his attempts at reform may not always have been successful, they were indubitably genuine. Nasir-u-Din, if not exactly a great Shah, was the best ruler produced by the Kajar dynasty.

The Financial Difficulties of Muzaffar-u-Din.—Muzaffar-u-Din, the Heir-Apparent, was at Tabriz at the time of his father's assassination. He was accompanied on his journey to Teheran by the British and Russian representatives. There were fears that his brothers might fight for the throne, but they hastened to proffer their allegiance, and the new monarch entered Teheran without opposition and was crowned in peace.

It was generally believed that Nasir-u-Din had left a full treasury to his successor; but upon examination it was found that little or no money had been saved and the rumours of hoarded millions were totally unfounded. The new Shah, whose health was bad, was most anxious to make a foreign tour almost immediately after his coronation. He desired more especially to undergo a cure at Contrexéville; but doubtless he also wished to imitate his father's example and enjoy the delights of Europe. He was also surrounded by a hungry horde of followers, who mingled with their congratulations strong hopes of speedy reward for past services. The question of ways and means was thus one of urgency. Hitherto Persia had contracted no public debt, and it will always be remembered against Muzaffar-u-Din that during his reign this fatal step was taken.

The Russian Bank.—Having described the foundation of the Imperial Bank of Persia, I must now make a brief reference to its Russian counterpart and rival, known first as the *Banque des Prêts* and now as the *Banque d'Escompte de Perse.* Chirol[1] in his valuable work points

[1] *The Middle Eastern Question*, by Sir Valentine Chirol, 1903.

out that the methods pursued by Russia to acquire financial power in Persia were identical with those so successfully employed in China. The Russian Bank is a branch of the Russian Ministry of Finance, and is used as a political instrument. Its operations are not conducted on business lines. Consequently the annual deficit must be great, not only from losses due to its operations, but also from the extravagant scale of its buildings and the huge salaries paid to its managers. However, by lending large sums on real estate and by other methods the financial grip of Russia has been riveted on Persia; and the results are held to justify the expenditure of a few million roubles.

Persian Loans.—The raising of a Persian Government loan was attempted first in England; but just then the Tobacco Monopoly and the Persian Bank Mining Rights Corporation, had given Persia a bad name on the London Stock Exchange; and it was evident that without the strong support of the British Government money would not be forthcoming. The security offered, namely, the Customs of Southern Persia, was ample. But immediate control by the British capitalists was insisted upon, instead of eventual control in case of default; and ostensibly on this rock the loan foundered.

This gave Russia an opening of exceptional promise. In 1900 she agreed to lend Persia £2,400,000 at 5 per cent, with a sinking fund. The security was the Persian Customs exclusive of the Gulf ports. One condition was that the Persian Government should repay the balance of a loan of half a million contracted with the Imperial Bank of Persia to provide compensation for the Tobacco Monopoly; and all other loans were simultaneously to be discharged. Furthermore, it was stipulated that for a period of ten years no new loans should be contracted by Persia from any foreign power; and also that without the consent of Russia Customs dues should not be lowered. The loan was issued nominally at $86\frac{2}{3}$ with a commission of $1\frac{2}{3}$ per cent. Consequently, when the sum due on account of the Tobacco Monopoly and the other bank debts had been paid off, little more than one million

sterling was available to meet all the claims for arrears of salary and on other accounts. The result was that the first loan was very soon absorbed in totally unreproductive expenditure, and in the following year a second loan was contracted on the same security for 10,000,000 roubles, or just over a million sterling. To the new loan was attached a concession for a road from the frontier town of Julfa on the Aras to Teheran *via* Tabriz. Certain rights to work petroleum and coal were also acquired. These may prove to be of value when the conversion of the road into a railway becomes an accomplished fact.

These two loans have been financially disastrous for Persia. Her annual revenue at that period was about £1,500,000, and yet in three years sums almost equal to the revenue were borrowed and spent, with nothing in the way of reproductive expenditure to show for them. Since this date the debt of Persia has steadily increased, and according to the latest statistics it has now reached 6½ millions. This sum is exclusive of nearly half a million claimed for losses due to robberies.

The Belgian Customs Administration.—Twenty years ago, when I first visited Persia, the levying of customs was as bad and as corrupt as any other branch of Persian administration. Each important custom-house was farmed by the Central Government to a wealthy notable, or in some cases to a local chief. Customs were levied on no system whatever, the usual method of procedure being for the merchant to make a bargain with the farmer. Europeans declined to pay more than the treaty 5 per cent, but native merchants, after bargaining at the port, were freely taxed in the interior. To give some notion of the conditions prevailing, I cannot do better than quote an instance. Shortly after founding the Consulate at Kerman, in 1895, I informed the customs farmer that the Hindus, as British subjects, were not liable to any internal dues, as they had paid the 5 per cent at Bandar Abbas. My letter much upset the Persian official, who enquired my authority. In reply I referred him to the treaty. "Treaty!" he exclaimed. "What treaty! *I* have signed no treaty!"

To-day all this is changed. In 1898 a Belgian official was placed in charge of the custom-houses of Kermanshah and Tabriz. So successful was he, that gradually all the custom-houses (with the sole exception of Mohamera) were placed under his control, and by 1901 he was able to show an increase of 50 per cent in the customs receipts of Persia. As this revenue was almost the only available asset on which loans could be raised, the extravagant Shah was quick to appreciate the services of M. Naus, who was made a Minister and granted an enormous salary. The customs are still in the hands of the Belgians and are well managed by an able body of men with some Persian experience.

The New Customs Tariff.—When the Shah applied to Russia for a second loan, it was stipulated that there should be a revision of the Russo-Persian Treaty and an increase in the general tariff. It was easy for Russia to gain the consent of the Shah to an arrangement by which he was to gain a larger income and at the same time increase the value of the customs as a security for future loans. The tariff was drawn up by M. Naus in conjunction with a Russian official, and so well was the secret kept for more than a year that the Belgian was able to remove the only obstacle in the way of the new agreement. This was the Treaty of Erzeroum ; but with some concessions to offer on behalf of Persia, and with strong backing from Russia, the Belgian negotiator accomplished his mission with complete success. The commercial convention was signed in November 1901, and in December 1902, the ratifications of the Russo-Persian Convention were duly exchanged ; but the secret was kept until February 1903, when its conclusion was publicly announced.

An Analysis of the New Tariff.—The publication of the new tariff was received with enthusiasm in Russia and with consternation by British merchants. It was framed entirely in the interests of Russia and against those of Great Britain, and constituted a notable diplomatic triumph for the northern power. Among the principal imports into Persia from Russia are petroleum and sugar. The

moderate charge of 5 per cent was reduced in the case of the former to $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, and in the case of the latter to $2\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. On the other hand the duty on one of the chief British imports, tea, was raised from 5 per cent to 100 per cent. This preposterous charge has, however, defeated its own object, by encouraging smuggling in so valuable and portable an article.

It is now a decade since the tariff was introduced; and those who prophesied the disappearance of British trade must have been agreeably surprised to find that they were entirely wrong. In a report made by a specially qualified trade Commissioner in 1904,[1] the trade of Persia with the British Empire is calculated at exports half a million, and imports two millions, which is also the average of the two previous years. In 1911 the imports had risen to over four millions, while the exports also show distinct improvement.

The Action of the British Government.—The position of the British Government at this juncture was difficult. For nearly a century no special precautions had been taken by treaty to protect British commercial interests, and we had been content to claim the same terms as had been accorded to Russia by the treaty of Turkomanchai. We had not realized, as Chirol puts it, "that its maintenance depended not upon Persia and ourselves, but upon Persia and Russia."

The situation was one of extreme urgency. We were faced with a new tariff which was due to come into force in February 1903. Two courses were open. One was to protest and to wait for an opportunity at which pressure might be brought on Persia to negotiate a special treaty. The objection to this course was that Russia might, in the light of the experience gained in the working of the new tariff, find means of still further differentiating against British trade. The second course was to negotiate a separate treaty which would recognize the accomplished fact and prevent worse from befalling us. The latter alternative was believed to be the least disadvantageous, and by a convention signed in February 1903, the best was made of a bad job.

[1] Blue Book (Cd. 2146).



From a photograph by the Author.

KURD BOY BURNING RUE TO AVERT THE EVIL EYE.

Ali Asghar Khan, the Atabeg-i-Aazam.—After the fall of *Mirza* Husayn Khan, in 1873, there was but one *Sadr-i-Aazam* until the appointment of Ali Asghar Khan by Nasir-u-Din to be his Grand Vizier, under the title of Amin-u-Sultan or "The Trusted of the Monarch." Son of a royal cup-bearer and grandson of a Georgian cook of Gurtan, near Isfahan, the Amin-u-Sultan was typically Persian in his opportunism, his political acuteness, his charming manners, and his lack of business qualities.

During the reign of Nasir-u-Din he was very much the servant of that capable monarch. He exercised much greater influence under the weak Muzaffar-u-Din, as that sovereign owed his undisputed succession to the excellent arrangements made by the Grand Vizier, who wisely followed the advice of Sir Mortimer Durand, the British Minister. A year after the succession of the new Shah the *Sadr-i-Aazam* (as he had become) was driven from office through the efforts of a party headed by H. H. the Farman Farma, the cousin, son-in-law and brother-in-law of the new monarch, and certainly one of the ablest men in Persia.

After a year spent in exile, the *Sadr-i-Aazam* was restored to his post, which he held for five years, latterly with the title of *Atabeg-i-Aazam*. He suffered great unpopularity during this period for allowing Persia to become financially involved; and yet the Shah constantly wanted more money to waste on the most unworthy objects. *Pul mikhawam* (I want money) was his parrot-like cry, after the Minister had explained the impossibility of raising a fresh loan. The *Atabeg-i-Aazam* was afraid to go further on this ghastly rake's progress, and this weakened his position with the Shah. Moreover, disturbances were reported in many parts of Persia and these again lowered his prestige. Finally, the death of his rival, the Hakim-ul-Mulk, in the most suspicious circumstances apparently alarmed the Shah. At any rate, his own dismissal followed.

Anglo-Russian Rivalry.—During the period dealt with in this chapter the rivalry between Great Britain

and Russia became more acute as the years went by. Both powers were fighting keenly to forward their respective interests, and consequently it was impossible, in the absence of any definite agreement, to avoid friction.

Persians have frequently told me that the Tobacco Régie was a very heavy blow to the moral prestige of Great Britain. This was followed by the two loans, both of which were furnished by Russia, but the really crushing blow was the new customs tariff. These blows were mainly delivered while Great Britain was engaged in the South African War and consequently was not free to take a strong line.

Against these undoubted shocks to the moral and material prestige of the British Government can only be set the tour of Lord Curzon in the Persian Gulf, the Sistan Boundary Commission and the opening of the Nushki-Sistan route. The appearance of the Viceroy of India in the Persian Gulf in the winter of 1903, escorted by the East India squadron, reacted favourably on the political situation, as it corroborated the statement of policy by Lord Lansdowne in the previous spring. Speaking in the House of Lords, the British Foreign Minister had declared: "I say it without hesitation, we should regard the establishment of a naval base or of a fortified port in the Persian Gulf by any other power as a very grave menace to British interests, and we should certainly resist it with all the means at our disposal." This statement was timely and served as an encouragement to British officials in Persia. It may be noted that during Lord Curzon's tenure of the Viceroyalty increased interest was manifested in Persia by the Government of India. Many new consulates were founded, a trade mission was despatched to south-east Persia, and in every way British commerce was fostered and supported. Owing to these measures British prestige gradually recovered, until the results of the Russo-Japanese struggle modified the policy of Russia in the direction of an understanding with Great Britain.

پادشاه قبله عالم سلطان اعلیحضرت همایونی
اعلیحضرت شهریاری شهنشاه اعلیحضرت ملوکانه
اعلیحضرت ظل الله خاقان

Titles of the Shah.

CHAPTER LXXXI

THE STATE OF PERSIA BEFORE THE REVOLUTION

The Sovereign, The Pivot of the Universe, The Sultan, His Auspicious Majesty, His Royal Majesty, The King of Kings, The Royal Possessor of Kingdoms, His Majesty the Shadow of Allah, the Khakan.—The Titles of the Shah.

The Old Order and the New.—The recent revolution whereby the old order has given place to the new will be dealt with in the final chapter. It marks the dawn of a fresh period which at present it would be difficult to criticise with profit. In this chapter I am dealing entirely with the state of Persia as I knew it before the revolution, at a time when there was no idea of adopting a constitution modelled on European lines.

The Powers of the Shah.—The Shah of Persia was an absolute monarch. The saying that "the law of the Medes and Persians altereth not" testifies to this conception of the monarchy in Achaemenian times; and the proud, nay arrogant, titles of the Shah given as a heading to this chapter embodied the Persian conception of his position as handed down from the bygone centuries.

In his person were "fused the threefold functions of government, legislative, executive and judicial. He was the pivot upon which turned the entire machinery of

public life." [1] There was no great council of the nobles to control the monarch, such as existed among the Parthians; nor was there an Ecclesiastical Council. And yet the power of the Shah was limited. The Sultan of Turkey is acknowledged to be the *Khalifa*, or Vice-Regent of the Prophet, and as such claims the religious veneration of his subjects. But the Shahs of Persia, descended from a Turkish tribe, can advance no such claim; and the religious power is vested in the *Mujtahids* of Kerbela and Najaf, who, it is to be noted, live outside Persia. As the agitation against the Tobacco Régie proved, their influence is a power to be reckoned with.

It is difficult to define the exact limitations to which the Shah was subject. In case of a rebellion or of a conspiracy against the throne, the monarch could put to death hundreds of his subjects and confiscate their property. Again, members of the royal family, ministers of State and all public officers and dependents were entirely in the power of the Shah, who could sentence them to punishment, which was as a rule carried out immediately. In other cases where the death penalty could be inflicted law and custom had to be observed.

The taxes were collected, concessions were granted, and presents were offered, all for the sole benefit of the Shah and his courtiers, whose extravagance kept Persia poor. On the other hand, the monarch for his own sake was bound to maintain an army to protect his throne. Enlightened or religious Shahs, too, have spent large sums in building bridges and caravanserais and in erecting mosques and shrines.

The Kajar dynasty has maintained an armed force which, owing to corruption and the extinction of military spirit in the upper classes, has become hopelessly inefficient; so much that it hardly counted in the recent revolution. Few if any public works can be set to the credit of the Kajar dynasty.

His Duties.—The duties of the Shah were heavy. Daily he received his principal ministers, who brought him reports and took the royal orders. After this he

[1] Curzon i. 433.



From a photograph by the Author.

THE STONE LION AT MESHED.

appeared in the public audience, attended by the ministers and great officers of state. At this function, termed *Diwan-i-Am*, or "General Court," all business for which publicity was desirable was transacted; rewards or punishments were ordered, and the monarch expressed his views on any subject on which he considered a public utterance to be politic. At noon the monarch retired to his *anderun*. In the afternoon the procedure was much the same, except that the levée was less of a public function than in the morning, this fact being recognized in its title of *Diwan-i-Khas*, or "Special Court." The monarch who carried out his duties in the manner described was in constant touch with his subjects, large numbers of whom were permitted to approach him; and this accessibility must certainly be set to the credit of the system. Against it was the fact that the Shah had very little time for attending to important state affairs, being frequently occupied in hearing the most trivial cases at the "Courts." There was also the time wasted by ministers, who were kept in attendance for many hours daily, whereas they should have been working at their offices.

The Grand Vizier.—The position of the Grand Vizier has always been of very great importance. Usually, though not invariably, he controlled all the departments of the government. He enjoyed the close confidence of his master and directed the entire policy of the State. As may be supposed, he was the object of countless intrigues, and the Shah's dissatisfaction meant his fall. Until quite recently the fall of a Grand Vizier was speedily followed by his execution, but now a milder spirit prevails. The Vizier has as a rule been a man of no family, for it was deemed impolitic to appoint to this post a prince of the blood or a great noble.

The Machinery of Government.—The administration of Persia was conducted on lines similar to those already described in connexion with the reforms of Darius. The empire was, and still is, divided into provinces under Governors-General or Governors appointed by the Crown; and these provinces are subdivided into districts and smaller divisions. The custom was for the provinces to

be farmed out. The would-be farmer, who had to be a man of position, accepted responsibility for the revenue as laid down. In addition he paid the Shah a large *pishkash* or present, with a similar but smaller gift for the Grand Vizier. Upon reaching the province the Governor sold every post in turn, to indemnify himself for his expenditure and also to lay by for a rainy day. It was this corruption, termed *mudakhil*, "receipt or perquisite," which permeated every class and cankered the body politic in Persia.

The fact that every post was put up to auction, and that so long as the revenue and the *pishkash* were duly paid questions were not asked, led to terrible acts of tyranny. In some cases the Governor ordered his minions to manufacture crime, and in others he even sent out bands of men to rob for his benefit. Justice, too, was sold like everything else. It must, however, be remembered, as I have mentioned elsewhere, that Persia was in the medieval stage of civilization; and, however picturesque that period of history may appear to the modern reader in Europe, it covered just as much cruelty, injustice and corruption as that which I have here described.

Justice.—By way of preface to the subject of justice, it is necessary to point out that the theory of law in Persia differs from that in Europe. In the West a crime is regarded almost entirely as an offence against the State, whose duty it is to exact the penalty. In the East the point of view is rather that a crime is an offence committed against an individual, whose right to exact retribution or compensation is acknowledged.

In Persia there are two laws—the religious and the common. The *Shar*, or religious law, is based on the Koran, the opinions of the *Imams*, and the commentaries of the Shia jurists. This body of law has been codified and divided into four heads, dealing respectively with religious rights and duties, contracts, personal affairs, and judicial procedure. It is administered by the *Mujtahids* and *Mullas* and takes cognisance of offences against religion, all questions concerning land and marriage, divorce, etc. Indeed, by the theory of Islam, there are

very few questions that do not come under its jurisdiction. The venality and injustice of these doctors of law, who rob the orphan and the widow and make huge fortunes in a few years, are, so far as my experience in Kerman and Khorasan goes, deplorable, although my Persian friends assure me that there are a few honourable exceptions. It is also stated that the *Mujtahids* of Kerbela and Najaf are men of a higher character.[1]

The rulers of Persia, although converts to Islam, have retained the common law and usages of their ancestors; and this system, which is unwritten and may be termed the King's as apart from the Moslem law, is known as *Urf* or Custom. There have been epochs in Persian history when, as under Sultan Husayn, everything was settled by the sacred law, whereas under Nadir Shah the entire authority was vested in the secular authority. In the period under review, it may be accepted that religious and civil cases were settled by the divines; and that cases of murder, theft, and violence were dealt with by the secular courts, although by the theory of Islam a murderer must be sentenced by a *Mujtahid*.

In practice the Governor sentenced notorious highwaymen and other individuals to whose sentences the *Mujtahids* were unlikely to take exception. If, however, a murderer had money and friends, the latter interceded on his behalf with a *Mujtahid*, who frequently induced the murdered man's family to accept blood-money. In this case both the *Mujtahid* and the Governor-General took money from the murderer or his relations. The *lex talionis*, a life for a life, still prevails; and, if blood-money is not accepted, the murderer is frequently handed over to be done to death by the relatives of the victim. In such cases the children of the murdered man are encouraged to stab the murderer and to cover themselves with his blood. The terrible injustice and corruption of the secular courts was as marked as that of the religious courts; and unless these Augean stables are cleansed there is little hope of internal reform.

[1] In medieval Europe the monks played a nobler part, although they obtained possession of a large proportion of the land. The fact that they were celibate and held property only as a corporation may in part account for this.

When commercial questions arise, it is usual to appoint two arbitrators, one from each side, who go into the question with care, and as a rule their decision is just. The merchant class is, indeed, the most trustworthy in Persia. In conclusion, it is to be noted that no record is kept of sentences passed, or of the reasons for which they were passed, under either the religious or the secular law.

Punishments.—Punishments are still very cruel, every torture imaginable being practised. A new ruler frequently tortures the first gang of brigands that he captures, not from cruelty but in order to inspire terror. Gradually, however, European influence is humanizing Persian justice, and fewer cases of burying alive in mortar, shoeing with horse shoes and similar punishments are now heard of. The universal punishment of the sticks, better known in Europe as the bastinado, cannot be passed by without notice. It is inflicted on the highest and on the lowest; and in Persia there is no great loss of dignity in undergoing the punishment. Some twenty years ago the *Kawam-ul-Mulk*, the hereditary mayor of Shiraz, was ordered the sticks by the Governor-General. In his honour a silk carpet was spread on the ground. The punished man is said to "eat sticks." It must be recollected that in a poor country like Persia it is impossible to have well regulated prisons; and consequently the more summary the punishment the better, if only the decisions were inspired by justice, and not influenced by money.

Revenue.—In dealing with the question of revenue, it may be convenient to take a special province as an example; and for this purpose I select Khorasan, with which I am best acquainted.

Revenue was, and still is,[1] collected under the following heads:

1. Taxes on crops and garden produce.
2. Taxes on tradesmen, artisans, etc.
3. Poll-tax.

[1] The revenue was not taken over by the Belgians until 1913, and at present it is generally being levied on the old lines, with a gradual improvement of methods.



From a photograph by H. R. Sykes.

IN THE MESHED BAZAAR.

4. Taxes on sheep, goats, etc.
5. Taxes on mines.

The revenue of Khorasan from these sources in 1905 was £137,713 in cash and 21,778 tons of grain (wheat and barley) in kind. A large proportion of the grain was given to pensioners and troops, leaving only 1160 tons to be sold. The fixing of the price was an affair of much haggling, and needless to say the Government received very little under this head. The Governor-General through the Vizier collected about £30,000 above the estimate. Out of this, £14,000 was paid to the Shah and £6,000 to the Grand Vizier as *pishkash*. This left £10,000 profit, to be divided between the Governor-General and the Vizier.

But this sum represented only a percentage of the Governor-General's profits, which were increased by :

(*a*) Levying a percentage on all cash pensions and mixing at least 20 per cent of earth in the grants of grain.

(*b*) Profits from "justice" referred to above.

(*c*) Profits from the sale of minor governorships and other posts. It was customary to appoint a man, take perhaps £400 from him, and then dismiss him a few months later. His successor would pay about £200 for the post, which he would hope to hold until the following *No Ruz*, or New Year's Day.

(*d*) Sending special officials to enquire into complaints, real or invented. The local Governors paid large sums to these men, which they in turn had to give to their masters, keeping a percentage for themselves.[1]

(*e*) Windfalls, such as the death of rich men, brought in large sums to the Governor-General and Governors, who extorted them from the heirs.

Taxation.—Of the five kinds of taxes enumerated above, the first is that on crops. Here the unit is the plough, the theoretical assumption being that one plough in three belongs to Government. But, as the plough is assessed at one-tenth of its actual output of 6500 lbs. of grain, the tax levied is one-tenth and is termed *Ushr*. The assessments were as a rule very old, and, although

[1] *Vide The Glory of the Shia World*, chap. viii.

about 50 per cent above the legal tax was levied, they were nevertheless light. In some cases villages had grown enormously, and as the tax remained stationary it was purely nominal.

The tax on tradesmen and artisans was levied on the guilds, each guild being responsible for a certain sum. The poll-tax was calculated at about eight shillings per family ; but here again the assessment was on the villages and not on the individual. Taxes on sheep, etc., were levied at the rate of about sixpence per sheep ; but the assessment was very imperfect. The nomad tribesmen, who are the largest owners of sheep, paid taxes through their chiefs. The taxation of mines included that on the famous turquoise mines of Nishapur.

It must not be supposed that only legitimate taxes were levied in Persia. On the contrary, the ingenuity of the tax collector was remarkable and instances of fantastic imposts have from time to time been brought to my notice. For example, a certain village was called upon a century ago to provide a cradle for the son of a governor ; and a sum of money is still levied annually on this account. Charges to maintain sowars to fight the Turkoman, to provide cartridges, to provide horses for the royal stable, etc., etc., are still exacted in many parts of the country.

A Persian Village.—By way of conclusion to this chapter I will give some account of a typical Persian village, followed by the description of a peasant.[1] In both cases I have made a comparison with the Panjab, which contains the finest and best-fed peasantry in India.

One great difference between a Persian village and one in the Panjab is that in the former the villager can do any kind of work. Consequently, he is not obliged to keep parasites to skin his cattle and perform other tasks which religion or custom forbids him to do ; in other words there is no caste.

A Persian village is frequently enclosed inside a high mud wall, in which case the houses are small and squalid. Usually, however, they occupy a good deal of room ; and

[1] These studies are based on my *Report on the Agriculture of Khorasan*, published by the Government of India in 1910.

a certain number of walled gardens are also a pleasing and profitable feature. The centre and club of a village is its bath. This is frequently paid for by the landlord, or in other cases is subscribed to and built by the villagers, who pay a fixed amount of grain per family to the bath man. In the case of small villages, the inhabitants of three or four subscribe together for a bath.

The village of which I have made a study is owned by a merchant. It consists of thirty-two domed houses, built of sun-dried bricks round an enclosed square. It possesses no mosque, bath, or caravanserai. The site occupies one acre of ground ; and two walled gardens, which adjoin the village, and grow fruit trees, vines, willows, etc., have together an area of $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres.

The population is :

Men and youths	20
Women	15
Children (mainly unfit for agricultural labour)	15
Total . . .	50

The following is the live-stock owned by the village community :

Donkeys	14
Oxen and cows	20
Goats and sheep	150
Fowls	50

The total cultivated area is 946 acres. Of this, 346 acres receive *kanat* irrigation, and the remainder is dependent upon rainfall. The quality of the soil is good. There is one *kanat* only, which is the property of the owner of the village, who keeps it in a proper state of repair. Should any work on it be necessary, the villagers are employed for the purpose and receive a small payment. Each villager receives water every tenth day for about six or seven hours.

The land is let to tenants-at-will. The owner has a representative in the village, whose duty it is to superintend the distribution of water, to collect his master's rent and generally to act as steward of the property.

For this he receives a monthly payment of twelve shillings from the proprietor, and also realizes a small share of the crop from the tenants on his own account. There is also a *dashtban*, or ranger, who receives £2 in cash, 1300 lbs. of wheat and 65 lbs. of cotton annually.

The tenants bear all the expenses of cultivation and furnish their own seed-grain. The water is provided free by the proprietor, who on both irrigated and unirrigated land takes half the crop as rent. It is taken in kind in the case of grain crops, and in cash, calculated at the market rate, in the case of crops which cannot conveniently be divided. The tenants are ten in number, and the average area of their holdings is ninety-four acres. They own eight yoke of oxen. The chief crops grown are wheat, barley, oil-seeds, opium, and lucerne. Cotton, millet and turnips constitute the autumn crops.

The proprietor alone is responsible for the payment of the Government taxes. They are collected in two instalments, at the time of harvesting the spring and autumn crops. As a rule the taxes are paid in cash, but the proprietor may be called on to pay in kind, or partly in cash, partly in kind. The revenue assessed on the village is £86, but the amount actually collected is rarely less than £140 per annum. This latter figure represents about one-seventh of the gross value of the crops, whereas I understand that in the Panjab one-sixth is levied.

A small income is derived by the villagers from the sale of brushwood, which they collect in the desert and sell for fuel. Hides are disposed of in the neighbouring town. A few foxes are trapped during the winter months and their skins are sold at about two shillings each. Wool is sold at the rate of about two shillings for the clippings of a sheep. The breeding of poultry yields a small profit. The women of the village weave a coarse cloth and also make sacks, but only in sufficient quantities for their own use.

A Persian Peasant.—A Persian peasant family, the unit of the village and ultimately of the nation, deserves careful study. The peasant and his wife, living in a



From a photograph by the Author.

PLOUGHING IN THE NISHAPUR VALLEY.

colder climate than the Panjabi, are, as might be expected, better clad, although to our ideas their clothes are not wholly adequate for the very severe climate of Khorasan. On the other hand, they do not move about early in the winter, except when they take their produce for sale ; and, if the weather be bad, they stay at home. The percentage of children who die from insufficient clothing must be very high in both countries.

The peasant wears cotton trousers and a cotton shirt. These are made from locally woven cotton material, which is generally dyed blue. Over this he wears a long coat reaching to below the knees, with very long sleeves. This garment is made of striped calico, wadded with cotton, and is generally kept in its place by a waist-belt of white calico ; in it bread and other articles are tied up. A second coat, generally made of dark brown woollen homespun and lined down to the waist, is also worn. In winter a long woollen coat reaching down to the knees is added. Shepherds, camel-drivers, and some others have huge white felt coats which are very warm. On his head the peasant wears a felt cap, which is more or less a skull-cap and brimless, or an embroidered skull-cap round which a puggari is wrapped. Shoes are invariably worn ; socks and puttees are donned when needed.

His wife has clothes of the same stuff, but generally of a gay colour. She wears a pair of very wide trousers falling to below the knees, and a long chemise with a cloak above. Round her head she winds a square piece of muslin, which is sometimes fastened with a handkerchief. Over all these she wears a long sheet, which is usually blue, or sometimes white, and which covers her entire person.

The consumption per head of grain amounts on an average to 50 lbs. of wheat per month. In Persia wheat as a rule is the staple food, and barley and other inferior grains are used only when there is a dearth of wheat. The bread is made in an oven twice a week. The Persian eats curds, cheese, eggs, beetroot, turnips, onions, garlic, and various herbs ; his bread he eats as a rule with curds and mint. He seldom drinks tea. The use of this beverage is steadily on the increase, but only well-to-do

peasants can afford to indulge in the luxury regularly. Meat also is a luxury, but is occasionally eaten during the winter. A peasant usually has three meals, in the morning, at noon, and at sunset; of these, the morning meal is light and the other two are full meals. He manages to save about £1 a year, but if he is single his savings are sometimes higher. When wheat is dear the peasant makes money.

The Panjabi, to continue the comparison, generally lives on barley and millet and sells his wheat. Indeed, in every way his scale of living is much lower. As an Indian once put it to me, "In Persia bread and meat is the question in the towns; but in India bread alone."

All peasants, both men and women, smoke tobacco, which they have generally raised on their own land.

Every house has a *kursi* arranged as follows: a wooden frame is set in the middle of a room and live charcoal placed under it in an open brazier. A quilt is then spread over the frame, and the family sits, works and sleeps in the same room under the quilt and is thus kept warm and comfortable, although cases of death from asphyxiation are not uncommon.

An ordinary peasant rarely spends more than the following amount on the marriage of his children:

Clothes and jewellery . . .	Ts. 15 or £3
Expenses of entertainment of guests .	Ts. 20 or £4
Total . .	Ts. 35 or £7

The parents of a girl charge from £4 to £20 as the price of the mother's milk given to the girl during infancy; this sum is generally used for the purchase of the bride's clothes and jewellery. In the Panjab, on the other hand, hundreds of rupees are spent on a marriage, which cripples the family permanently.

To summarize, the peasant in Persia, and especially in the cold parts of the country, is certainly better clad and better fed than people of the same class in the Panjab. The household comforts, too, are greater. In the Panjab the peasants are in the hands of the money-

lenders to a considerable extent, whereas in Persia this is rarely the case. Moreover, thousands of the Khorasan peasants go to work in Russian Turkestan during the winter and thus supplement their incomes. Persians are not of a saving disposition like the majority of Indians, who save to excess but ruin themselves on weddings. Finally, the Persian peasant appears to be finer in physique and more intelligent than the Panjab cultivator, and in spite of the oppression that prevails is better off from many points of view.

The Tribesmen.—No picture of Persia would be complete without reference to its tribesmen, who may number one-fourth of the entire population. The ethnographical medley is great, with Kurds, Turkoman, Timuris (of Arab origin), Hazaras, Baluchis, Turks, and Arabs in Khorasan alone; but, although these are of different origin and in many cases speak different languages, their customs are similar. They usually live in black tents woven from goat's hair cloth, and gradually graze their flocks towards the mountains in the spring, returning to the plains in the autumn. They practically never marry outside the tribe and are consequently pure bred, hence the immutability of their separate customs. Nominally Moslems, these free sons of the *dasht*, as the untilled land is termed in Persia, obey nobody except their chief, who in cases of importance summons a council composed of the elders of the tribe.

The authority of the chief depends on his personality; and the more the inner working of a tribe is studied the greater is the number of the jealousies, rivalries, and feuds that are disclosed. At present the Bakhtiari tribe is of great importance, owing to the part it has played in the recent revolution; but in no tribe are there greater divisions, one section having even fought for the ex-Shah against the majority of its fellow-tribesmen.

The greater freedom of the women, the virility of all classes, and the splendid health enjoyed by the nomads are worth much; and the English traveller usually feels drawn towards them and realizes that their virtues far outweigh their faults.



MUZAFFAR-U-DIN.

CHAPTER LXXXII

THE GRANTING OF A CONSTITUTION TO PERSIA

I do not like the fashion of your garments. You will say they are Persian attire; but let them be changed.—SHAKESPEARE, *King Lear*.

The Origin of the Constitutional Movement.—The origin of the movement in favour of constitutional government in Persia is quite recent.[1] Nasir-u-Din, although extremely fond of European tours, did not encourage his subjects to follow his example, nor did he as a rule permit the sons of the Persian nobility to be educated abroad. Consequently, European thought and ideas penetrated into Persia but little during his reign; and although, as we have seen, an agitation arose against the Tobacco Régie, there was nothing in the shape of a popular demand for a constitution.

During the reign of the timid Muzaffar-u-Din fear of the Shah weakened and respect diminished. External movements, too, such as the defeat of Russia by Japan, reacted on the internal situation. Moreover, the number of Persians who, by reason of acquiring a European language, posed as leaders of their fellow-countrymen increased enormously. Among them were a few well-educated men, but the large majority were ignorant and intensely arrogant. Finally, the strong feeling against the loans and the use to which their proceeds were put was

[1] This chapter is based mainly on enquiries made by me from a large number of my Persian friends, some of whom have played a distinguished part in the constitutional movement. I have also consulted the Blue Books. Browne, in his *Persian Revolution*, has sometimes allowed his heart to run away with his judgment, and has thereby weakened the cause he pleads for so earnestly.

intensified by the retrograde policy and oppressive rule of the Ayn-u-Dola, whose career is referred to below. This combination of circumstances brought about a popular movement for the dismissal of the obnoxious Minister, which according to Persian precedent took the form of sitting in *bast*, or sanctuary; and the demand for a constitution, inspired by a few Persians with European education, was gradually formulated.[1]

Sayyid Jamal-u-Din.—The founder of the movement was a certain *Sayyid* Jamal-u-Din. This remarkable man was the son of a village *Sayyid* of no position and was born in 1838 near Hamadan. After being educated at Najaf, he resided for some years in Afghanistan and adopted the title of "The Afghan." He travelled and taught in India, in Egypt, and elsewhere, and at one time settled in Constantinople. There he pretended to be a Sunni and gained fame as an eloquent and learned doctor of law. He was, however, accused of infidelity by the *Shaykh-ul-Islam*, the leading religious official in Turkey, and was obliged to leave the city.

His connexion with Nasir-u-Din was brought about through the deep impression made upon the Shah by certain articles which he wrote for an Arabic newspaper whose title may be translated "The Indissoluble Link." He was summoned to Persia and made a member of the Royal Council, and his opinion carried great weight with the sovereign. This state of affairs naturally aroused the jealousy of the *Amin-u-Sultan*, who induced the Ottoman Ambassador to press for his deportation. Knowing that the word "law" was obnoxious to the Shah, he stated that the *Sayyid* had caused disturbances by advocating the adoption of fixed laws, and had been expelled from India, Egypt, and Turkey. He gave it as his opinion that it would be dangerous to retain in Persia a man with such revolutionary ideas. The Shah agreed, and Jamal-u-Din was instructed to quit the country and travel.

He again met Nasir-u-Din in Europe during that monarch's third journey; and the Shah, thinking him

[1] Very few Persians understood what a constitution meant, and during the crisis a British official was reproached in the following terms: "We have sat in *bast* three days, and yet you have not given us 'Constitution'!"

more dangerous abroad than in Persia, brought him back as an honoured guest. Jamal-u-Din took advantage of his return to preach his revolutionary ideas, and they made such progress that a rising appeared imminent. The Shah wished to seize him, but he escaped and took sanctuary at Shah Abdul Azim, a shrine close to Teheran. There he remained for seven months, fulminating against the Shah and advocating his deposition. Among his followers was *Mirza* Riza of Nuk,[1] who afterwards assassinated Nasir-u-Din. Jamal-u-Din was at length arrested in his house, which adjoined the sanctuary, and was again expelled from Persia, in 1890. The Shah certainly appears to have treated with leniency a subject who was guilty of high treason. Handed over to the Turkish authorities, the *Sayyid* was taken to Basra, where he was kept under observation. He managed, however, to escape by steamer and joined Malkom Khan in London, where they edited the newspaper *Kanun*. Not long after the Sultan, alarmed at the influence gained by this journal, thought it desirable to invite Jamal-u-Din to revisit Constantinople, where he was treated as an honoured guest but was not free to leave.

On the assassination of Nasir-u-Din, the extradition of the *Sayyid* was demanded together with that of three other revolutionaries.[2] The Sultan surrendered the three latter men, and they were executed, but he refused to hand over Jamal-u-Din, who shortly afterwards died. Thus passed off the stage a man possessed of considerable capacity and much personal magnetism. Though unfettered by scruples, he was honest in his devotion to his revolutionary ideals, and tried to improve the position of Islam.

Prince Malkom Khan.—Among the protagonists who attacked the old order was Malkom Khan, whose career was extraordinarily varied. He was the son of a certain Yakub Khan, an Armenian who became a convert to Islam, and first appeared at Teheran as a conjurer, whose feats of

[1] Nuk is a small district of the Yezd province. The inhabitants of Kerman much resent the imputation that *Mirza* Riza was a Kermani.

[2] The extradition of these men had been demanded some time previously and they had been imprisoned at Trebizond, but before the assassination the Sultan had refused to hand them over to the Persian Government.

legerdemain excited wonder among the simple Persians. As would have been the case in medieval Europe, his skill offended religious feeling, and the Shah, who was displeased with him on another account,[1] ordered him to leave Persia. Some years after, in the sixties, he reappeared at Teheran and founded a Masonic Lodge. The *Faramush Khana*, or "House of Forgetfulness,"[2] as it is termed, attracted the Persians strongly by its combination of novelty and mystery; and many members of the best families became initiated.

Nasir-u-Din at first looked on this new departure as a passing fashion, but Ferrukh Khan, the successful negotiator of the Treaty of Paris, frightened His Majesty by saying that, if he allowed his subjects to become initiated, they might conspire against him. Moved by this argument, the Shah imprisoned the Master of the Lodge, a prince of the blood, and other initiates; and Malkom Khan was again ordered to leave Persia. Nothing daunted, he secured the support of *Mirza* Husayn Khan, at that time Persian Ambassador at Constantinople, and through his influence was appointed Minister in London in 1872. While holding this appointment he was given the title of Prince.

When Nasir-u-Din visited England in 1889 he granted Malkom Khan, in return for a comparatively small gift, a concession for a Persian lottery. The Minister sold it for a large sum, and an English company was formed to work it. The *Mullas*, however, objected that these lotteries were a form of gambling, which is forbidden by the Koran. The Amin-u-Sultan took their part and tried to induce Malkom Khan to surrender the concession. The latter, however, pointed out that he had sold it and therefore could not do what was asked. The Amin-u-Sultan then sent an abusive telegram to Malkom

[1] An eye-witness tells me that one day Malkom Khan produced an order for a salary of one thousand tomans and said to the Shah, "Why is not my salary paid?" The Shah denied that he had issued an order in Malkom Khan's favour, and declared that, although the official document was correct, he would only accept a document sealed with the royal private seal dipped in the special ink of the Shah. Malkom Khan immediately produced out of his pocket an order fulfilling all these requirements, whereupon the Shah sagely remarked that such a man was far too clever to be kept in Persia.

[2] The Persian, if asked about the secrets of masonry, replies that he has forgotten.

Khan, who replied in similar terms. He was thereupon dismissed from his post, and became bitterly hostile to the Amin-u-Sultan, and in a lesser degree to the Shah.

Determined to take revenge, Malkom Khan, with the co-operation of Jamal-u-Din, published the paper *Kanun*, or "Law," referred to above. In it he recommended a fixed code of laws and the assembly of a parliament. He denounced his enemy the Amin-u-Sultan in violent terms; and the Minister, in retaliation, punished any one who took in the obnoxious paper.[1] The influence of the *Kanun*, which was written in excellent Persian, was considerable; and Malkom Khan, though scarcely a disinterested patriot, certainly roused Persia more than any previous writer had succeeded in doing.

The Ayn-u-Dola.—In 1903, upon the dismissal for the second time of Asghar Ali, the *Atabeg-i-Aazam*, by Muzaffar-u-Din, a council of five Ministers was constituted to carry on the Government; but very soon afterwards the Ayn-u-Dola, a prince of the blood and son-in-law of the Shah, was appointed Minister of the Interior and assumed control of affairs. In the following year he was given the title of *Sadr-i-Aazam*, and he continued in this office until August 1906. Thus the Ayn-u-Dola was the Minister under whose rule the constitutionalists won their great victories; and, as many Persians consider that the conflict was brought about mainly by his reactionary stubborn character, His Highness calls for special notice.

As a youth he was educated in Teheran at a college which had been recently founded by Nasir-u-Din. There the professors apparently found him intractable; for they presented a petition to the Shah in which they stated that they had tried flogging, starvation and other punishments, all in vain, and requested His Majesty to remove the unpromising pupil. The Shah consented and sent the young Prince to Tabriz, to serve Muzaffar-u-Din. He grew up with his new master, became his Master of the Horse, and was honoured by the hand of his

[1] It was smuggled in among bales of calico or through foreign subjects and was rarely sent by post.



H.H. THE FARMAN FARMA.

daughter in marriage. I met His Highness first some eighteen years ago when he was Master of the Horse to the Heir-Apparent, and again later after his fall from office. To me he appeared to be a fine old crusty Tory who frankly disliked innovations, but was from the Persian point of view experienced and capable. Foreign questions were almost beyond his comprehension.

The Visit to England of Muzaffar-u-Din, 1902.—After securing the second loan, Muzaffar-u-Din made his second journey in Europe, and on this occasion visited England.[1] The Shah braved the terrors of the Channel, which were very real to him, mainly in the expectation of receiving the Order of the Garter, of which his deceased father had been a recipient. But he was only offered a portrait of King Edward set in diamonds, which he did not accept; and he left England utterly dejected. His prestige suffered owing to what his Court regarded as a slight, and only partial amends were made by the despatch of a special mission in the following year to bestow the coveted order. By a coincidence which was possibly designed, the long-kept secret of the new tariff was revealed by Russia at the very time when the Garter Mission was at Teheran.

The Condition of Persia before the Revolution.—Before describing the events which preceded the grant of the constitution, I cannot do better than quote at some length from the memorandum drawn up by the British Legation.[2] It runs as follows:—

> The condition of Persia had been for some time growing more and more intolerable. The Shah was entirely in the hands of a corrupt ring of courtiers who were living on the spoils of the Government and country. He had parted with the treasures inherited from his father, and with most of the Imperial and national domain. He had thus been obliged to have recourse to foreign loans, the proceeds of which he had spent in foreign travel or had lavished on his courtiers. There was a yearly deficit, and the debt of the country was growing daily.
>
> . . . .
>
> A new Grand Vizier had been appointed, whose moving

[1] On the occasion of his first tour in Europe the English Court was in mourning and consequently the Shah was not invited.

[2] *Vide* Blue Book, Persia, No. 1 (1909), p. 2.

principle was believed to be independence of foreign control. His first act was to attempt some sort of financial reform, the object of which was to render the country independent of foreign financial assistance. But as soon as he had obtained control of the Government, it was apparent that his main and principal object was to make money. He made an alliance with the Shah's chief adviser for a division of the spoil. Governments were put up for sale, grain was hoarded and sold at extortionate prices, the Government domains were stolen or sold for the benefit of the two conspirators, rich men were summoned to Teheran and forced to disgorge large sums of money, oppression of every sort was countenanced for a consideration; the property and even the lives of all Persian subjects were at their mercy. Finally, there was every reason to believe that a conspiracy was on foot to dethrone the foolish and impotent Shah and to oust the Valiahd. In their place was to be put the Shoa-es-Sultaneh, the Shah's younger son, who was a by-word even in Persia for extortion and injustice.

The policy of the Atabeg and his friends had thus aroused the opposition of all classes in Persia: of the few more or less patriotic statesmen, who knew to what a goal the country was being led; of the priests, who felt that their old power and independence would perish with that of their country; and of the great mass of the population and the mercantile classes, who were the daily victims of the tyranny of their oppressors.

The First "Bast," December 1905.—The movement which ended in the grant of a constitution was at first merely a protest against the Ayn-u-Dola, who was held to be responsible for the unpopular loans, for the equally unpopular journeys of the Shah, and generally for the corrupt and oppressive government of the country.

The first actual movement was caused by an act of the Governor of Teheran, who bastinadoed a respectable old merchant on the alleged charge of making a corner in sugar. By way of protest against this act, a number of merchants took sanctuary at the Masjid-i-Shah, or "Mosque of the Shah," where they were joined by some of the chief *Mullas*. The Imam Juma, the official head of the mosque, was hostile to the agitation, and at the request of the Ayn-u-Dola he drove out the agitators with sticks. Instead of dispersing, they proceeded to the shrine of *Shah* Abdul Azim, outside Teheran, where their numbers increased day by day. It is of considerable

interest to note that Mohamed Ali *Mirza* (now the ex-Shah) contributed large sums for the support of the agitation, with a view to securing the downfall of the Ayn-u-Dola. According to information supplied by a Persian friend, as soon as His Royal Highness heard of the movement, he sent for the *Mullas* of Tabriz and called upon them to support it. The partisans of the exiled *Atabeg-i-Aazam* also actively supported the agitation and supplied it with funds.

In vain the Shah sent a high official to induce the multitude to disperse. The favourite was received with marked hostility, and his mission was a failure. The pressure on the monarch became intolerable, and finally he yielded to the popular demands, promising in an autograph letter to dismiss the obnoxious Ayn-u-Dola and to convene an *Adalat-Khana*, or "House of Justice." On the receipt of this letter the leaders of the movement returned to Teheran in the royal carriages; and the first phase of the struggle ended in the promise to satisfy the popular demands. It is to be noted that as yet there was no demand for a constitution.

The Exodus to Kum, 1906.—With curious blindness the Persian Government supposed the danger was over since there were dissensions between the popular leaders and the priests and a number of men who were believed to be trustworthy had been collected to support a reactionary policy. Consequently, no steps were taken to give effect to the royal autograph except the issue of a proclamation by the sovereign promising Courts of Justice, a new Code, and a Council to consider the question of reforms.

In the spring of 1906 the Shah was approached by means of a petition, which prayed His Majesty to give effect to the promises contained in his letter. In the middle of May, however, he had a paralytic stroke, and the Ayn-u-Dola, who was all-powerful, decided to embark on a policy of repression. *Sayyid* Jamal, an eloquent preacher, was expelled and retired to Kum. *Sayyid* Mohamed, who had also denounced the Ayn-u-Dola, was seized. A mob collected, shots were fired, and

a student who was a *Sayyid* was killed ; but the prisoner was rescued. The funeral of the victim of the soldiery was marked by further disturbances, which resulted in the death of fifteen persons. The Masjid-i-Jami, or "Mosque of Assembly," in the centre of Teheran, was now the scene of a second *bast.* On this occasion soldiers prevented supplies from being brought in, and the agitators sought permission to retire to Kum, which was granted on condition that the *Mujtahids* departed alone. On the way they issued a notice threatening to leave Persia in a body unless the Shah fulfilled his promises. As their absence would stop all legal transactions, this threat was really a serious one, for it would be equivalent to placing the land under an interdict.

The Great "Bast" in the British Legation, August, 1906.—Simultaneously with the exodus to Kum a second and still more important movement began. The Ayn-u-Dola, according to Persian custom, ordered the reopening of the bazaars, which had been closed as a protest, and announced that any shops which were left shut would be looted. Thereupon a few representatives of the merchants and bankers visited the British representative at Gulahak, the summer quarters of the Legation, to enquire whether they would be driven out if they took sanctuary in the grounds of the British Legation at Teheran. The reply being given that force would not be used to expel them, a small number of merchants immediately took sanctuary ; and their numbers increased until there were at least twelve thousand men camped in the Legation garden. Their demands were for the dismissal of the Ayn-u-Dola, the promulgation of a Code of Laws, and the recall of the Kum exiles. The Shah again yielded. He dismissed the Ayn-u-Dola, appointed the liberal *Mirza* Nasrulla Khan, Mushir-u-Dola, to be his successor, and invited the *Mujtahids* to return from Kum. But the people, instigated by a few Europeanized Persians, refused to be content and demanded a regular constitution, to include a representative National Assembly, with guarantees of the Shah's good faith.

The Magna Charta of Persia.—For a long time the



From a photograph by Col. H. A. Sawyer.

A GORGE IN THE BAKHTIARI COUNTRY.

people refused to negotiate directly with the Government; but finally through the good offices of the British representative an amended rescript was drawn up and accepted. This document I quote in full:

Whereas God Most High (glorious is His State!) hath entrusted to Our hands the direction of the progress and prosperity of the well-protected realms of Persia, and hath constituted Our Royal Personage the Guardian of the Rights of all the people of Persia and of all our loyal subjects—

Therefore on this occasion, our Royal and Imperial judgment has decided, for the peace and tranquillity of all the people of Persia, and for the strengthening and consolidation of the foundations of the State, that such reforms as are this day required in the different departments of the State and of the Empire shall be effected; and we do enact that an Assembly of delegates elected by the Princes, the *Mujtahids*, the Kajar family, the nobles and notables, the landowners, the merchants and the guilds shall be formed and constituted, by election of the classes above mentioned, in the capital Teheran; which Assembly shall carry out the requisite deliberations and investigations on all necessary subjects connected with important affairs of the State and Empire and the public interests; and shall render the necessary help and assistance to our Cabinet of Ministers in such reforms as are designed to promote the happiness and well-being of Persia; and shall, with complete confidence and security, through the instrumentality of the first Lord of the State, submit [their proposals to Us], so that these, having been duly ratified by Us, may be carried into effect. It is evident that, in accordance with this August Rescript, you will arrange and prepare a code of regulations and provisions governing this Assembly, and likewise the ways and means necessary to its formation, so that, by the help of God Most High this Assembly may be inaugurated and may take in hand the necessary reforms.

We likewise enact that you shall publish and proclaim the text of this August Rescript, so that all the people of Persia, being duly informed of our good intentions, all of which regard the progress of the Government and People of Persia, may, with tranquil minds, engage in prayer for Us.

Given [under Our hand] in the Sahib-Qiraniyya Palace on the fourteenth of Jumada the Second in the eleventh year of Our Reign (= August 5, 1906).

By this historical document, addressed to the Grand Vizier, a National Assembly was conceded, and reforms, a Court of Justice, and an amnesty were all promised. In

short, without bloodshed or civil war, the Persians had gained on paper everything demanded by their leaders. This rescript was read out to the assembled crowd in the Legation and was hailed with enthusiasm. The Legation garden was then vacated, and a few days later the return of the Kum exiles was made the occasion of a great national demonstration.

The Regulations for the Assembly.—But the reactionary party had not lost all hope. The Ayn-u-Dola suddenly reappeared, and the Shah was persuaded not to sign the Regulations for the Assembly. It seemed probable that disturbances would again break out; but, as the result of advice tendered by the British and Russian representatives, the Ayn-u-Dola was ordered to proceed to his estate in Khorasan and the document was signed and published. It contained the following regulations: (*a*) The division of Persia into eleven (or thirteen) electoral areas; (*b*) the Assembly to consist of 200 members; and (*c*) the eligibility of all males between thirty and seventy, provided that they were literate, were not in Government service, and had not been convicted of any crime.

The Opening of the National Assembly, October, 1906.—So eager was public opinion for the Assembly to begin its functions that as soon as the sixty-four members for Teheran were elected there was a formal opening by the Shah, in the presence of the triumphant divines and of the European representatives. His Majesty, who was very ill, just managed to reach his seat unaided, but was unable to hold the pipe which it is customary to smoke on such occasions. In accordance with Persian custom, the royal rescript ordering the Parliament to begin its labours was handed by the Shah to the Chief Herald, who read it to the assembled members. This completed the memorable ceremony.

The Signing of the Constitution.—The first task of the National Assembly was the nomination of a committee charged with the duty of drawing up the terms of the Constitution. When the result of their labours was submitted to the Assembly and it was found that there was to be a Second House in which the Government

would have a majority, there was much dissatisfaction and confusion. It was said that the popular cause had been betrayed, and the President was insulted. The Constitution, however, was signed and ratified both by the Shah and by his heir. This was the last act of Muzaffar-u-Din, who died a few days later.

The New Order.—There is no doubt that the events of 1906 ended the Old Order and brought into existence the New. What the future may be, whether Persia, which gained so bloodless a victory over absolutism, will prosper under a constitutional form of government or not lies on the knees of the gods. My task, for the present, at any rate, is finished; and I can only wish the amiable and interesting people among whom I have lived the best years of my life in close touch with all classes of the community, a future comparable to that illustrious past which I have attempted, however inadequately, to describe.



Haroun-al-Rashid.

LIST OF AUTHORITIES

Abridged Translation of the History of Tabaristan, by Edward Granville Browne. 8vo. 1905.

Adventures of Hajji Baba in England, by James Morier.

Aeschylus in English Verse, by Arthur Sanders Way. 8vo. 1906.

Alexander's Empire, by Professor J. P. Mahaffy. 8vo. 1887.

Ammianus Marcellinus, Works of.

Ancient History of the Near East, by H. R. H. Hall. 8vo. 1913.

Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian, by J. W. MacCrindle. 8vo. 1877.

"Antiquity of Oriental Carpets," *Journal Royal Society of Arts*, November 1908.

Arabia, the Cradle of Islam, by Rev. S. M. Zwemer. Large 8vo. 1900.

Arminius Vambéry, his Life and Adventures, by himself. 8vo. 1884.

Arrian, *Anabasis*; translation with Commentaries, by E. J. Chinnock. Small 8vo. 1884.

Baber, *Memoirs*, by himself; translated by J. Leyden and W. Erskine. 4to. 1826.

Baber, *Memoirs*, by Lieut.-Col. F. G. Talbot. 8vo. 1909.

Babylonia and Assyria, History of, by Hugo Winckler. 8vo. 1907.

Bactria, by Hugh George Rawlinson. 8vo. 1912.

Book of Governors, The, by Thomas, Bishop of Marga, edited by E. A. Wallis Budge. 1893.

Bruce, Memoirs of Peter Henry. 4to. 1782.

By Mountain, Lake, and Plain: being Sketches of Sport in Eastern Persia, by Lieut.-Col. R. L. Kennion. 8vo. 1911.

Calendar of State Papers, edited by W. Noel Sainsbury. 10 vols. Large 8vo. 1860–. In progress.

Caliphate, The, by Sir William Muir. 8vo. 1891.

Caravan Journeys in Persia, etc., by J. P. Ferrier. 8vo. 1856.

Chao Ju-kua: His Work on the Chinese and Arab Trade. Translated by F. Hirth and W. W. Rockhill. Large 8vo. 1911.

China and the Roman Orient, by Dr. Friedrich Hirth. 8vo. 1885.

Chronica Majora, of Matthew Paris, edited by H. R. Luard. 7 vols. Large 8vo. 1872–83.

Coinage of Lydia and Persia, by Barclay Vincent Head. 4to. 1874.
Coins of the Shahs of Persia, by Reginald Stuart Poole. 8vo. 1887.
Collection de monnaies sasanides, by Bernhard Dorn. 4to. 1875.
Collection of Treaties, etc., by Sir Charles Umpherston Aitchison. 7 vols. Large 8vo. 1862–65.
Commentaries of the Great Alfonso Dalboquarque, translated by W. de G. Birch (Hakluyt Society). 4 vols. 8vo. 1875–84.
Complete Collection of Treaties and Conventions, etc., by Lewis Hertslet. Vols. i.-xxiii. 8vo. 1827–1905.
Coronation of Solyman the Third, by Jean Chardin. Fo. 1686.
Cradle of Mankind, by William Ainger Wigram and Edgar T. A. Wigram. 8vo. 1914.
Crusaders in the East, The, by W. B. Stevenson. 8vo. 1907.

Das babylonische Nimrodepos, by Paul Haupt. 4to. 1881.
Dawn of Modern Geography, by Charles Raymond Beazley. 3 Parts. 8vo. 1897–1906.
Des Peuples du Caucase, etc., by Mouradja D'Ohsson. 8vo. 1828.
Dictionnaire géographique de la Perse, etc., by Barbier de Meynard. 8vo. 1861.
Dynasty oj the Kajars, translated by Sir Harford Jones Brydges. 8vo. 1833.

Early Voyages and Travels to Russia and Persia, edited by E. D. Morgan and C. H. Coote (Hakluyt Society). 2 vols. 8vo. 1886.
Early Voyages and Travels to Russia and Persia, by Anthony Jenkinson (Hakluyt Society).
Early Zoroastrianism, by J. H. Moulton. 8vo. 1913.
Eastern Persia, edited by Sir F. J. Goldsmid. 8vo. 1876.
Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to the Great Mogul. Edited by William Foster (Hakluyt Society). 2 vols. 8vo. 1899.
Embassy to the Court of Timour, translated by Sir Clements R. Markham (Hakluyt Society).
Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics, edited by James Hastings. In progress. 4to. 1908–
England and Russia in the East, by Sir H. C. Rawlinson. 2nd ed. 8vo. 1875.
English Factories in India, by William Foster. 6 vols. 8vo. 1906–12.
Ethnology, by Augustus Henry Keane. Small 8vo. 1901.

"Fifth Journey in Persia," by Lieut.-Col. Percy Molesworth Sykes, *Journal Royal Geographical Society*, December 1906.
Five Great Monarchies of the Ancient Eastern World, by Professor George Rawlinson. 4 vols. 8vo. 1862–67.
From Heraut to Khiva, by Colonel James Abbott. 2nd ed. 2 vols. 8vo. 1856.

Gardens of the Great Mughals, by Constance Mary Villiers Stuart. 8vo. 1913.
Gates of India, by Sir T. H. Holdich. 8vo. 1910.

General Sketch of the History of Persia, by Sir Clements B. Markham. 8vo. 1874.
Geographical Memoir of the Persian Empire, by Sir J. M. Kinneir. 4to. 1813.
Geschichte der Chalifen, by Gustav Weil. 5 vols. 8vo. 1846–62.
Geschichte der Perser und Araber zur Zeit der Sasaniden, by Theodor Noldeke. 8vo. 1879.
Geschichte Irans und seiner Nachbarländer, by Alfred von Gutschmid. 8vo. 1888.
Glory of the Shia World, The. The Tale of a Pilgrimage. By Lieut.-Col. Percy Molesworth Sykes, assisted by Khan Bahadur Ahmad Din Khan. 8vo. 1910.
Great Persian War, The, by George Beardoe Grundy. Large 8vo. 1901.
Greece, History of, by Adolf Holm. 4 vols. Small 8vo. 1894–98.
Greece, History of, by George Grote.
Greece, History of, by Professor J. B. Bury. Small 8vo. 1908.

Hakluyt Society. Publications.
Heart of Asia, The, by F. H. B. Skrine and E. D. Ross. Small 8vo. 1899.
Hellenic Studies, Journal of.
Herodotus, edited with notes by R. W. Macan. Books iv.-vi., 2 vols. 8vo. 1895. Books vii.-ix., 2 vols. in 3. 8vo. 1908.
Herodotus, Commentary on, by W. W. How and J. Wells. 2 vols. 8vo. 1912.
Histoire de la Géorgie, by Marie Felicite Brosset. 4to. 1849.
Histoire de l'Art dans l'antiquité, by Georges Perrot and C. Chipiez. Vols. i.-ix. Large 8vo. 1882-1911.
Histoire des Mongols, by Mouradja D'Ohsson. 4 vols. 1834–35.
Historical Account of British Trade over the Caspian, by Jonas Hanway. 4 vols. 4to. 1753.
"Historical Notes on Khorasan," by Lieut.-Col. Percy Molesworth Sykes, *Journal Royal Asiatic Society*, October 1910.
"History and Evolution of the Dome in Persia," by K. A. C. Creswell, *Journal Royal Asiatic Society*, October 1914.
History of Persia, by Robert Grant Watson. 8vo. 1866.
History of Persia, by Sir John Malcolm. 2 vols. 8vo. 1829.
History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, by Edward Gibbon. (Smith's edition). 8 vols. 8vo. 1854.
History of the Imâms and Seyyids of Omân, translated by G. P. Badger (Hakluyt Society). 8vo. 1871.
History of the Moghuls of Central Asia, by Ney Elias and Edward Denison Ross. 8vo. 1898.
History of the Mongols, by Sir Henry Hoyle Howorth. 3 vols. in 4. Large 8vo. 1876–88.
History of the Revolution of Persia, by Father Krusinski; translated by Father du Cerceau. 2 vols. 8vo. 1728.
History of the War in Afghanistan, by Sir John William Kaye. 2 vols. 8vo. 1851.
House of Seleucus, The, by Edwyn Robert Bevan. 8vo. 1904.

India in the Fifteenth Century (Hakluyt Society).
Intercourse of China with Central and Western Asia in the Second Century B.C., by T. W. Kingsmill. 8vo. Shanghai. 1880.
Introduction to the History of the Assyrian Church, by William Ainger Wigram. Small 8vo. 1910.
"Is the Earth drying up?" by Professor Gregory, *Journal Royal Geographical Society*, February and March 1914.

Jalāl-al-Din: Selected Poems from the Dīvāni Shamsi Tabrīz, translated by R. A. Nicholson. Small 8vo. 1898.
Jami, *Salaman and Absal*, rendered into verse by Edward FitzGerald. 4th ed. 8vo. 1879.
Josephus, Works of.
Journal d'un voyage, by P. A. L. de Gardanne. 8vo. Paris. 1809.
Journey of Friar William of Rubruck, edited by W. W. Rockhill (Hakluyt Society). 8vo. 1900.

Lands of the Eastern Caliphate, by Guy Le Strange. Small 8vo. 1905.
L'Acropole de Suse, by Marcel Dieulafoy. Fo. Paris. 1890.
L'Art persan, by Albert Gayet. 8vo. 1895.
Le Désert, by Pierre Loti. Small 8vo. 1895.
Le Peuple et les langue des Mèdes, by Julius Oppert. 8vo. 1879.
Les Mystères de Mithra, by Franz Cumont. 2 vols. 4to. 1899.
Letters received by the East India Company, mainly edited by William Foster. 6 vols. 8vo. 1896–1902.
Life and Corresponaence of Major-General Sir John Malcolm, by Sir John William Kaye. 2 vols. 8vo. 1856.
Light from the East, by Charles James Ball. Large 8vo. 1899.
Literary History of Persia, by Edward Granville Browne. 2 vols. 8vo. 1902-6.
Literary History of the Arabs, by R. A. Nicholson. 8vo. 1907.

Maçoudi, *Les Prairies d'or*, translated by Barbier de Meynard. 9 vols. Paris. 1861-77.
Mahomet, *Life of*, by Sir William Muir. 4 vols. 8vo. 1858-61.
Man, a monthly record of anthropological science.
Marco Polo, *The Book of*, translated and edited by Sir Henry Yule. 2 vols. 8vo. 1903.
Merv Oasis, *The*, by Edmond O'Donovan. 2 vols. 8vo. 1882.
"Metals in Antiquity, The," by W. Gowland, *Journal Anthropological Institute*.
Middle Eastern Question, by Sir Valentine Chirol. 8vo. 1903.
Mohammadan Dynasties, by Stanley Lane-Poole. Small 8vo. 1894.
Mommsen, Theodor, Works of.

Nadir Shah, by Sir Henry Mortimer Durand. 8vo. 1908.
Nearer East, *The*, by David George Hogarth. 8vo. 1902.

Oldest Civilization of Greece, *The*, by H. R. H. Hall. 8vo. 1901.
Omar Khayyam, *Rubaiyat* of, rendered into verse by Edward FitzGerald.

Original Letters illustrative of English History, by Sir Henry Ellis. 3 series. 11 vols. 8vo. 1825–46.
Origin and Influence of the Thoroughbred Horse, by Prof. William Ridgeway. 8vo. 1905.
Overland to India, by Sven Hedin. 2 vols. 8vo. 1910.

Pahlavi Literature, by Edward William West. B 2. 8vo. 1896-1904.
Parthian Coinage, by Prof. Percy Gardner. 4to. 1874.
Passing of the Empires, 850-330 B.C., by Gaston Maspero. Large 8vo. 1910.
Persia and the Persian Question, by Lord Curzon of Kedleston. 2 vols. 8vo. 1892.
Persian Literature, by Claud H. A. Field. 8vo. 1912.
Persian Revolution, The, by Edward Granville Browne. 8vo. 1910.
Persia, Past and Present, by Prof. A. V. Williams Jackson. 8vo. New York, 1906.
Philip and Alexander of Macedon, by David George Hogarth. 8vo. 1897.
Plutarch's *Lives*.
Polybius, Works of.
Pulse of Asia, The, by Ellsworthy Huntington. 8vo. 1907.
Purchas His Pilgrimes. 1625.

Races of Man, The, by Joseph Deniker. Small 8vo. 1900.
Relation de Voyages, by Adam Olearius. Paris. 1639.
Report on the Agriculture of Khorasan, by Lieut.-Col. Percy Molesworth Sykes. (Published by the Government of India, 1910.)
Ride to Khiva, by Captain F. G. Burnaby. 8vo. 1876.
Rise of Portuguese Power in India, by Richard Stephen Whiteway. 8vo. 1899.
Royal Anthropological Institute, Journal of.
Royal Asiatic Society, Proceedings of.
Royal Geographical Society, Journal of.
Ruins of Desert Cathay, by Marc Aurel Stein. 2 vols. 8vo. 1912.

Sadi, *The Gulistan*, translated by E. B. Eastwick. 8vo. 1852.
Sculpture and Inscription of Darius the Great at Behistun, by L. W. King and R. C. Thompson. 4to. 1907.
Scythians and Greeks, by Ellis Hovell Minns. 4to. 1913.
Seistan, by G. P. Tate. Parts I.-IV. 4to. 1910–12.
Selections from the Annals of Tabari, edited by M. J. de Goeje. 8vo. 1902.
Seventh Great Oriental Monarchy; the Sassanian or New Persian Empire, by George Rawlinson. 8vo. 1876.
Short Cut to India, The, by David Fraser. 8vo. 1909.
Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy; Parthia, by Prof. George Rawlinson. 8vo. 1873.
Sketches of Persia, by Sir John Malcolm. 2 vols. Small 8vo. 1828.
Some Yeares Travels into Asia and Afrique, by Sir Thomas Herbert. Folio. 1638.

Song of the Reed, by Edward Henry Palmer. 8vo. 1877.
Strabo, *Geographica*, translation by H. C. Hamilton and W. Falconer. 3 vols. Small 8vo. 1854–57.
Sumer and Akkad, History of, by Leonard William King. Large 8vo. 1910.
Sword of Islam, by Sir Arthur Naylor Wollaston. 8vo. 1905.

Tabari, Works of.
Tamburlaine the Great, by Christopher Marlowe.
Ten Thousand Miles in Persia, by Lieut.-Col. Percy Molesworth Sykes. 8vo. 1902.
Texts and Versions of John de Plano Carpini and William de Rubruquis, edited by Charles Raymond Beazley (Hakluyt Society). 8vo. 1903.
Thousand Years of the Tartars, by E. H. Parker. 8vo. 1895.
Three Brothers, The; Travels of Sir Anthony, Sir Robert and Sir Th. Sherley. Small 8vo. 1825.
Through Persia on a Side-Saddle, by Ella Constance Sykes. 8vo. 1898.
Tour to Sheeraz, by Edward Scott Waring. 4to. 1807.
Travels and Researches in Chaldaea and Susiana, by William Kennett Loftus. 8vo. 1857.
Travels in Baloochistan and Sinde, by Sir Henry Pottinger. 4to. 1816.
Travels in Georgia, Persia, etc., by Sir Robert Ker Porter. 2 vols. 4to. 1821–22.
Travels of Pedro Teixeira, edited by W. F. Sinclair and D. Ferguson (Hakluyt Society). 8vo. 1902.
Travels of Venetians in Persia (Hakluyt Society).
Treasure of the Oxus, by O. M. Dalton. 4to. 1905.

Vers Ispahan, by Pierre Loti. 8vo. 1911.
Veterum Persarum et Parthorum et Medorum Religionis Historia, by Thomas Hyde. 4to. 1760.
Voyage dans l'Empire Othoman, L'Égypte et la Perse, by Guillaume Antoine Olivier. 6 vols. 8vo. 1801–7.
"Voyages of Diago Cão and Bartholomew Dias," by Ernst Georg Ravenstein, *Journal Royal Geographical Society*, vol. xvi. pp. 625-55.

Words and Places, by Isaac Taylor. Small 8vo. 1864.

Zohrab the Hostage, by James J. Morier. 3 vols. Small 8vo. 1832.
Zoroaster, by Professor A. V. Williams Jackson. 8vo. New York, 1899.

519

Muzaffarid, Shah Shuja.

INDEX

THE END

Printed by R. & R. Clark, Limited, *Edinburgh*.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

8vo. 10s. net.

THE GLORY OF THE SHIA WORLD

THE TALE OF A PILGRIMAGE

BY

MAJOR P. M. SYKES, C.M.G., C.I.E.

ASSISTED BY

KHAN BAHADUR AHMAD DIN KHAN

WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE TEXT AND
FOUR COLOURED REPRODUCTIONS FROM PERSIAN PAINTINGS

SPECTATOR.—"It conveys the strange and subtle charm which Persia exercises over the European mind. . . . What Major Sykes has given us is a faithful and living picture, without exaggeration or caricature, of modern life in Eastern Persia, and of men and things. . . . We strongly recommend a study of this record to the European reader, who will find in it much food for reflection. He will feel the clear, bright air of Persia, and live the free caravan life, listening to stories gay and pathetic, snatches of poetry and history, modern and legendary, till finally he stands on the sacred spot where no European has ever stood, where the great Haroun, the correspondent of Charlemagne, lies buried."

ACADEMY.—"So thoroughly has the author entered into the Oriental mind, so perfectly has he imbued himself with the thoughts, the aspirations, the very inmost life of the people from whom his hero is drawn, that to have taken Major Sykes, who describes himself as the translator and editor, literally, is not only pardonable, but is, moreover, as great a compliment as can possibly be paid to him. Books on Persia, Persian politics, and Persian life have become relatively plentiful, and many of them give considerable insight into the life of the people with whom they deal. The present book, however, differs from all these by the abundant light which it throws on the ideals, the thoughts, the customs, and the life of the Persian people."

FIELD.—"Major Sykes has placed English readers under a deep debt of gratitude. It is refreshing to come across a book so far removed from the ordinary. . . . Interesting and valuable as an attempt to depict Persian life and thought from within. And as a book to read it is wholly delightful. It abounds in anecdotes, and throws numerous side-lights on Persian customs and the Persian character. . . . The temptation to go on quoting from this entertaining volume is great, but to extract all the good things it contains would be to repeat the best part of the book. The illustrations are also full of interest."

PALL MALL GAZETTE.—"Many good stories, true or well invented, will be found in these delightful pages, wherein Persian patriotism and conceit are also fully illustrated. . . . The true origin of wine, or 'sweet poison,' can be read in this volume, and much discourse upon love and beauty. In fact, the book is full of information, and the only thing it does not contain is a single dull page."

LONDON: MACMILLAN AND CO., LTD.